

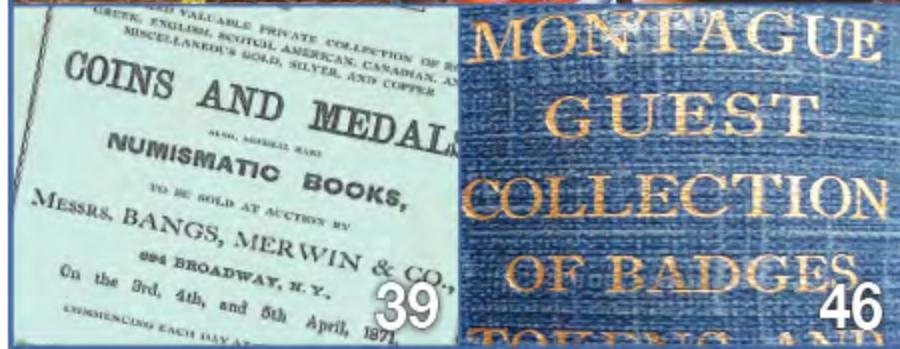
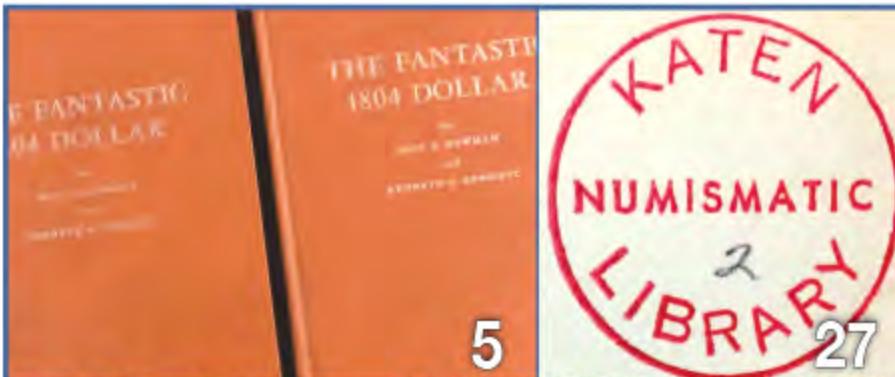
# THE Asylum

VOL. 38 NO. 4



WINTER 2020

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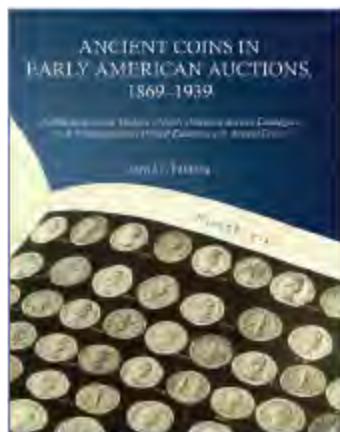
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## Table of Contents

### NBS News

Renew Your NBS  
Membership....Insert  
(check your mail-  
ing envelope for the  
expiration date of your  
membership)

Message from  
the President ..... 3

### Features

The Rare First Printing of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar:*  
An Explanatory and Comprehensive Census of  
Surviving Copies ..... 5  
By Leonard Augsburger and Joel J. Orosz

Good Manners for Today's Polite Coin Collector:  
A Cradle-to-Grave Handbook  
of Numismatic Etiquette ..... 26  
By Christopher R. McDowell

Remembering Frank Katen ..... 27  
By Charles Sullivan

21 Years After Frost's *Encheiridion:*  
The Second American Book on Ancients. ..... 29  
By David D. Gladfelter

My Personal Numismatic Library ..... 35  
By Charles Davis

James Ferrier, Jr.: Hardware Merchant, Numismatist  
and Microscopist ..... 39  
By Ted Banning

A Collection of Trifles ..... 46  
By David Pickup



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Tom Harrison  
NBS President

## Message from the President

Throughout the long storied history of book collecting, whether for knowledge, pleasurable reading or their accumulation as collectables themselves, special people have preserved treasured volumes for future generations to appreciate. Fortunately, since the first numismatic books were published, the numismatic community has had its share of collectors who have valued the recorded written history of the hobby.

Collecting sequential foundational works about our favorite numismatic items and personalities provides a view of the evolution of the scholarship of a particular branch of the hobby. Annotated auction catalogs transport us back to 19th-century smoke-filled auction houses to identify what specific collectors and dealers were acquiring. While the provenance of very few coins can be positively traced, occasionally numismatic works have been inscribed providing a link to a famous collector or dealer's library.

These works are the conduit that connect us to the pioneers of the hobby and provide an insight into their collecting realm. Undeniably, the technology age has provided incredible benefits to the hobby, however it cannot replace the tranquility of holding and perusing the pages of our antiquarian friends in our libraries. Thanks to the NBS membership, the tradition of collecting, appreciating and preserving these numismatic time capsules is being carried on for future generations.

May your numismatic library provide investigation, discovery and, most of all, enjoyment.



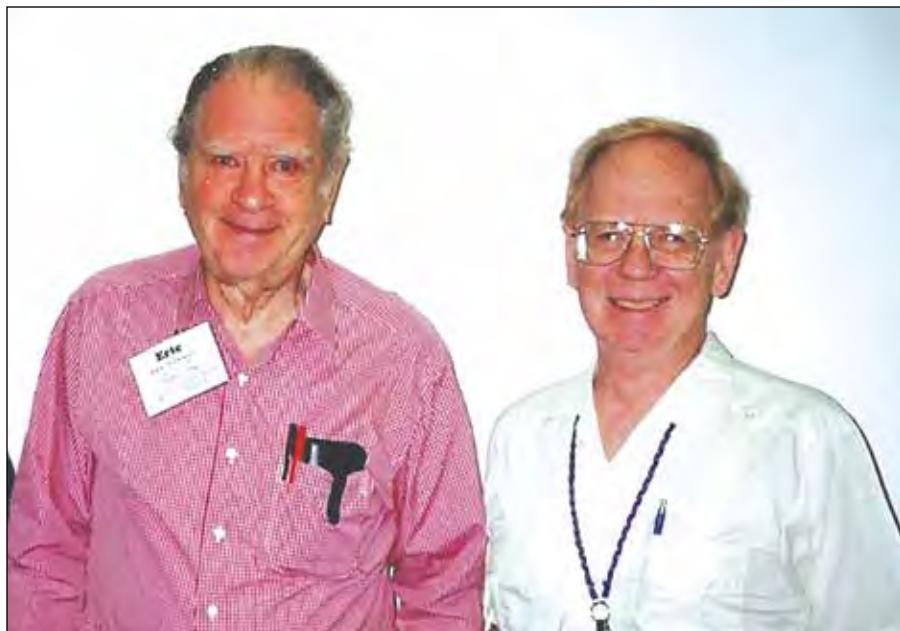
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Eric Newman and Ken Bressett at the 2000 ANA Summer Seminar



Side-by-side comparison of the covers of the two different printings (second printing to left, first printing to right), showing how the two appear identical from their covers

# The Rare First Printing of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar*: An Explanatory and Comprehensive Census of Surviving Copies

By Leonard Augsburger and Joel J. Orosz

The first printing of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* is the only numismatic book that rivals the rarity of the famed coin that comprises its subject. No more than 42 copies of the first printing were created in 1962, and it was never offered for sale to the public. After conducting the census presented herein, we are able to trace 33 survivors, which is only slightly more than twice the number of all surviving Class I, Class II, and Class III 1804 dollars. The story of how this first printing came to be, why it was so quickly withdrawn by its authors, and how it became one of the most avidly collected American numismatic books, lacks the mystery that for so long surrounded “The King of American Coins,” but still forms a distinctive chapter in its history.

*Note: all of the facts in the following history are taken, unless otherwise noted, from the second printing Eric P. Newman and Kenneth E. Bressett's The Fantastic 1804 Dollar.*

## *A Brief History of 1804 Dollars*

The story of the 1804 dollars begins 128 years before ink slapped paper on the first printing of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar*. The dollars dated 1804 were actually struck not in that year—nor indeed in any year when the U.S. Mint was making dollars for circulation—but rather in 1834, by the authority of an order from President Andrew Jackson. His administration was seeking to open diplomatic and trade relations with four middle- and far-eastern powers: Muscat (present-day Oman); Siam (Thailand); Cochin-China (Vietnam); and Japan. A diplomatic mission, headed by New Hampshire's Edmund Roberts, would sail in a small U.S. Navy squadron to treat with these four Asian powers, and for that purpose, diplomatic gifts were essential for negotiations. Among these gifts were fine textiles, the latest in firearms, and proof sets of “all coins now in circulation.”

As of 1834, it had been more than 30 years since the U.S. Mint had last struck a silver dollar, because the heavy crown-sized coin made an attractive target for exporters. Still, though American-made silver dollars of 1794-1803 were rarely found in circulation, the officials at the Mint decided that no diplomatic proof set as ordered by the President would be complete without an example of the largest silver coin, and determined to include one.

No silver dollar was contemplated for striking in 1834, so the Mint staff decided to include dollars of the last design that had been issued for circulation. Their own records indicated these were 19,570 of the draped bust type issued in 1804. Accordingly,

the Mint made new draped bust dies dated 1804, and struck an unrecorded number (at least 8) silver dollars for inclusion in the diplomatic proof sets, and perhaps a few extra to keep on hand for the Mint Cabinet (Museum) of Coins. These are the coins known today as the Class I 1804 dollars.

The little naval squadron set out in 1838, and envoy Roberts successfully treated with the Sultan of Muscat and the King of Siam, delivering his diplomatic gifts—including the proof sets of American coins—safely to these leaders. Roberts thereafter took ill and died, so the missions to Cochin-China and Japan were cancelled, and the squadron returned home by late 1839. The undelivered proof sets were returned to the Mint.

These Class I 1804 dollars were unknown to all outside the of the U.S. government. In 1842, however, Mint officials Jacob Eckfeldt and William E. DuBois authored one of the first American numismatic reference books, *A Manual of Gold and Silver Coins of All Nations*, and prominently illustrated therein was a Class I 1804 dollar. The community of United States numismatists was small in the early 1840s, but they were ardent to secure rarities, and in the next year, the Mint traded one of its 1804 dollars to collector Matthew Stickney for his unique *Immunis Columbia* in gold, which entered the Mint Cabinet. Over the next few years, other Class I specimens left the Mint, presumably via similar trades, although most were not documented. Today, a total of 8 Class I 1804 dollars are known to exist.

As the 1850s wound down, coin collecting in the U.S. was experiencing phenomenal growth. More advanced collectors sought 1804 dollars, mostly in vain. When demand is high, and supply all but non-existent, the temptation to create supply can become overwhelming. Certain Mint employees took the obverse die created in 1834, married it to a different reverse die, and struck perhaps a couple dozen plain-edge 1804 dollars, all to peddle for their personal gain. Around five of these Class II dollars were indeed sold outside the Mint, but the scheme was discovered by 1860, and the bogus pieces were recalled. Today, there is only a single plain-edge Class II specimen known, in the collection of the Mint Cabinet (which is itself now part of the National Numismatic Collection of the Smithsonian Institution).

But the chicanery at the Mint didn't end there. Starting in the late 1860s, Mint staff added edge lettering to most of the recalled Class II 1804 dollars, to make them pass for Class I (the so-called "originals"). Mint insiders then surreptitiously sold these Class III 1804 dollars, sometimes "laundering" them through dealers who had close connections at the Mint. This quiet distribution worked; a total of six such Class III dollars exist today, and, because the Treasury Department has elected not to enforce the illegality of incorrectly dated coins, Class IIIs are perfectly legal to own and trade.

While 1804 dollars of all three classes trickled out of the Mint from 1843 through the 1870s, their true "origin stories" never did, and for good reason. The Class I dollars were of doubtful legality; based on the misinterpretation of Jackson's Presidential order, the Mint had concocted a coin bearing a date thirty years before it was actually struck, thus violating Section 10 of the Mint Act of 1792. Moreover, this post-dated "novodel," was based not on an actual coin, but one that had never existed. All of the 19,570 silver dollars created in 1804 actually were struck with 1803-dated dies (when the Mint had serviceable dies on hand at the end of the calendar year, it kept striking

coins into the new year with these dies until they wore out). This practice was also a violation of the Section 10 of the 1792 Mint Act, which decrees that all coins must bear the date of the year in which they were struck. There is thus no such thing as an “original” 1804 dollar. Add to all of this the fact that the Mint never secured explicit authorization to trade the 1804 dollar duplicates for other coins to enrich the Mint Cabinet, and the legal status of the eight Class I coins is, at best, highly dubious.

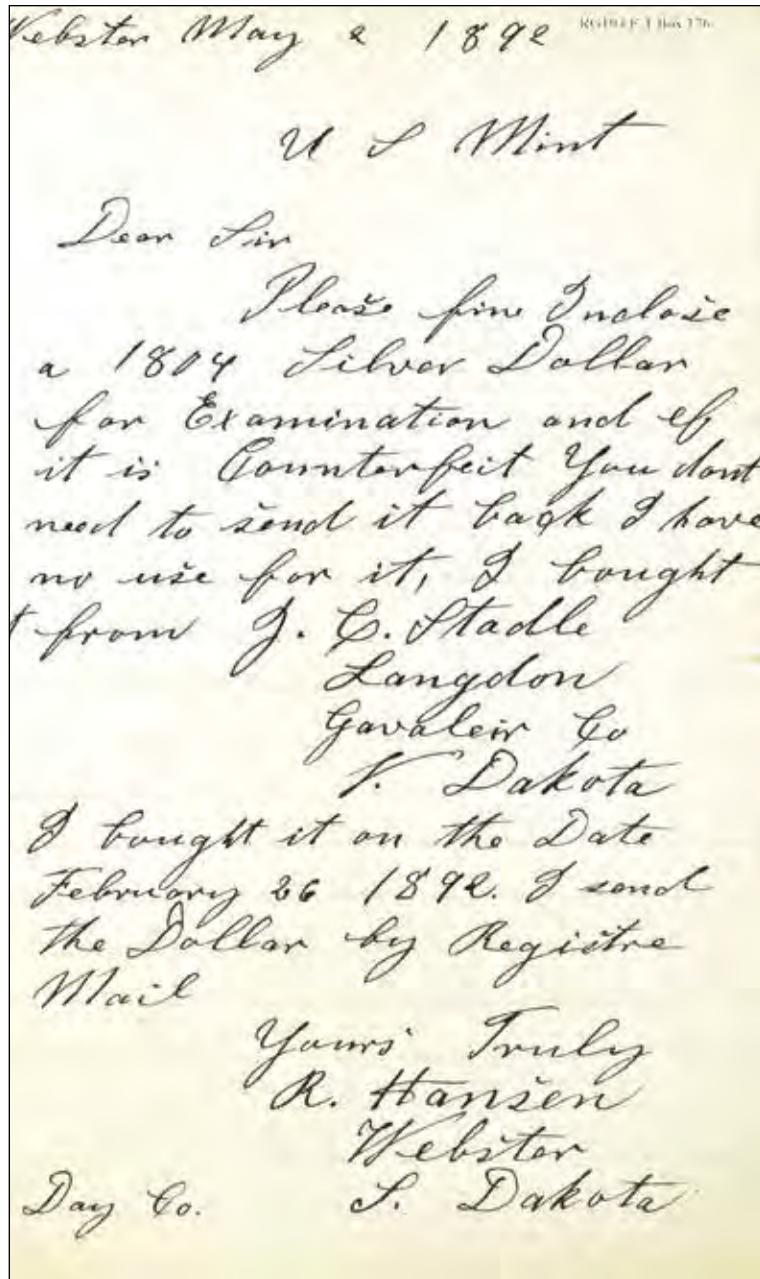
The Class I dollars are of uncertain legality, but the Class II and Class III were struck without any legal basis whatsoever. The Class II dollars were all struck extra-legally, sold inappropriately, then recovered. Some were then extra-legally edge-lettered, and laundered for sale through pet dealers and collectors who were trusted to keep mum about the circumstances of their purchases. Both Class II and Class III 1804 dollars lack even the fig leaf affirmation of an original diplomatic purpose, and in fact, should never have been created.

## *The Mystery of the 1804 Dollars*

None of the foregoing damning facts, however, were known to the collectors (and even most dealers) in the late 19th century. To them, the mystery was not that 1804 dollars existed—the Mint’s own records said that 19,570 were struck in 1804—the questions were how and why they had become so rare just a few decades after they were struck. Newman and Bressett note that in 1867, the notable dealer W. Elliot Woodward, writing in the *Boston Transcript* newspaper, repeated a story he had heard that 1804 dollars were created as part of proof sets intended for diplomatic gifts, and named the Sultan of Muscat as one of the recipients. Woodward had the story right very early in the game, but no one bothered to check the archives to confirm its validity. Mint officials, of course, had no incentive to explain why they had made the “1804” dollars in 1834, and especially no reason to call attention to the existence of the bogus Class II dollars. Woodward’s accurate explanation was therefore little noticed in 1867, and soon was replaced by a more romantic exposition that was dead wrong.

As early as the 1870s, when the Class III 1804 dollars were appearing on the market, the most popular rationale for their rarity was an appealing tall tale speculating that they had been exported from American shores. The classic version of this fable, as told in Ivan C. Michaels’ *The Current Gold and Silver Coins of All Nations* (1880), asserted that all 19,570 dollars supposedly struck in 1804 were sent to North Africa to pay the soldiers of the American expedition against the Barbary Pirates. Only a handful of specimens made their way back to the United States from “the shores of Tripoli.” Variations on the export tale have the entire mintage being shipped to Central America, China, or Hong Kong; alternatively, the shipment was lost at sea on the way to such destinations.

Nineteenth-century coin dealers, who were closer to the action, tended to fall into two explanatory camps. Those who had access to the Mint, like Captain John Haseltine, swore up and down that all 1804 dollars were original, and struck by the Mint during the year indicated on the obverse. The Mint was complicit in this charade, and even provided, at different times, owners of a Class I and a Class III dollar with certificates of their genuineness! Dealers without the good fortune of cozy relations with the Mint took a more jaundiced view. Ebenezer Locke Mason, for example, held that



Letter from R. Hansen to U.S. Mint, 5/2/1892, inquiring as to the authenticity of an 1804 dollar. By this time the coin was well known to even casual collectors. From the National Archives record group 104 (U.S. Mint), entry 1 (general correspondence), box 176.

all 1804 dollars then known were “restrikes from the original dies.” Several knowledgeable dealers, like David Proskey and Geoffrey Charlton Adams, went further, denouncing the 1804 dollars as “notorious” and as “fakes and frauds.” Even W. Elliot Woodward, who had gotten the story right in 1867, eighteen years later dismissed 1804 dollars as no longer being entitled to the distinction of “the King of Coins.”

In the midst of this morass of deceit and twice-told tales, one coin sleuth tried to piece together the true story. From 1887 to 1905, John A. Nexsen wrote a series of carefully researched articles published in *The American Journal of Numismatics* on the 1804 dollars. He identified 13 distinct pieces, some of which were previously unknown to numismatists. In the course of compiling this list, he discovered a number of forgeries, corrected many false statements, and was the first to notice (or at any rate publish) the fact that Class I 1804 dollars had a different reverse from the Class II and Class III specimens. But not even Nexsen could satisfactorily explain how the 1804 dollars were created in the first place.

For more than five decades after Nexsen’s last article was published, every time an 1804 dollar was offered at public auction, it was described with a witch’s brew of the thoughtful and the wishful, the proven and preposterous. Woodward’s opinion notwithstanding, the 1804 dollar has remained the “King of American Coins.”

Just how avidly collectors sought this rare dollar is illustrated by the lyrics of a song written by numismatist (and 1804 dollar owner) William Forester Dunham. His “American Numismatic Anthem,” a tribute to the ANA, was published in Dunham’s 1930 *Easy Finding List* for coins, Hard Times tokens, and encased postage stamps. The song’s last stanza reads:

Some wander off to encased stamps,  
Or paper stuff galore,  
But the one of all we most desire  
Is the coin of eigh-teen four.

Such fervor made it all the more surprising that numismatists possessed such sparse knowledge about their monarch. Indeed, many coins of lesser stature were far more thoroughly researched, and infinitely better understood, than this supposedly regal dollar.

## *The First Printing of The Fantastic 1804 Dollar*

*Note: all of the facts relating to the first printing of The Fantastic 1804 Dollar are, unless otherwise noted, taken from Chapter 27 of Roger Burdette, Len Augsburger and Joel J. Orosz, Truth Seeker: The Life of Eric P. Newman (2017). The authors of this census also had access to the relevant correspondence files of Eric P. Newman and Kenneth E. Bressett.*

The state of confusion about the antecedents of the 1804 dollars did not begin to change until 1956, when a dynamic young numismatist named Ken Bressett began gathering data about them. Bressett was particularly interested in tracking auction appearances of these coins, and in reconstructing their individual provenances. His careful detective work added the Childs specimen to Nexsen’s long-accepted total of 13 known examples.

In 1959, the year he joined Whitman Publishing, Bressett received from Vladimir Clain-Stefanelli, the Curator of the National Numismatic Collection of the Smithsonian Institution, a referral of a youthful numismatist named Lynn Glaser, who was also deeply interested in the King of American Coins. The two decided to jointly write an article on that topic, and shortly thereafter, Glaser recruited his friend Walter Breen to join them. Breen, in turn, knew that Eric P. Newman had been independently conducting research on 1804 dollars, and invited Newman to fill out the research and writing team. The contemplated article was expanded into a monograph, with Glaser's working title of "Dollar Chicanery" replaced by *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* at the suggestion of Newman's wife, Evelyn. This inspired title combined the literal meaning of "fantastic" (the product of a fantasy), with its colloquial meaning (of great size or intensity). Thanks to Bressett, Whitman signed on to publish the forthcoming book. Research began in earnest in 1960.

The subject of the book may have been fantastic, but the researching and writing partnership soon proved to be anything but. Glaser cherished unrealistically ambitious plans for the book to cover a large number of Mint restrikes issued over several decades during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Breen had to contend with officious interference in the project from his employer, John J. Ford, Jr. of New Netherlands Coin Company. Glaser and Breen individually contributed only intermittent and desultory research, then combined to create an over-ambitious outline that could not be fulfilled. In April of 1961, they surprised their coauthors by launching a new magazine, *The Metropolitan Numismatic Journal*, and their contributions to *Fantastic* dwindled to nothing. By the end of the year, Breen and Glaser were formally demoted from co-authors to "Associates in Research."

Newman and Bressett, freed from the "help" of Breen and Glaser, carried on with their research and writing. By April 6, 1962, they had reached their major conclusions, and these were unsettling. The "King of American Coins" was a pretender to the throne, not a legitimate business strike of 1804, but rather a novodel, struck at least three decades after the date on its obverse. It was created initially in violation of Section 10 of the Mint Act of 1792; then later surreptitiously restruck by nefarious Mint employees to meet collector demand and to line their own pockets; still later altered and "laundered" to collectors through complicit dealers. As a novodel, a post-dated piece struck without legal authorization, it was just one notch above a counterfeit coin.

The authors buttressed these hard conclusions with a huge amount of research showing that the Class I dollars were struck at the Mint ca. 1834-1835 using a collar (the dollars struck from 1793-1803 were struck without collars). They demonstrated that the Class II dollars were struck at the Mint ca. 1859, using a reverse die that differed from that employed for the Class I dollars, and that the Class III dollars were actually Class II dollars that, in the late 1860s, had edge lettering applied. Finally, they proved that the mysterious proof dollars of 1801, 1802, and 1803 were all struck contemporaneously with the 1804 dollars.

Chapter IX of the *Fantastic* manuscript focused on the story that W. Elliot Woodward had published nearly a century before, that the 1804 dollars were created to fill out proof sets to be delivered as diplomatic gifts. The authors discovered the letter

sent by Secretary of State John Forsyth to Mint Director Samuel Moore on November 11, 1834, informing Moore that:

The President has directed that a complete set of the coins of the United States be sent to the King of Siam, and another to the Sultan of Muscat. You are requested, therefore, to forward to the Department for that purpose, duplicate specimens of each kind now in use, whether of gold, silver, or copper.

What the authors could not find was any indication that the dollar—which had not been struck since 1803—was to be included in those sets. There was simply no evidence they could discover that any dollar—much less a novodel dated 1804—was to be included among those proof sets. In fact, so unlikely did it seem that an 1804 dollar had been included within the sets taken by the Roberts embassy to the Middle- and Far-East that the authors entitled chapter IX “The Diplomatic Gift Delusion.”

By the fourth of July, 1962, the draft book was ready for publication. In mid-July, the authors learned that the material chosen to cover the boards of the book, Kivar™, would not be available for several weeks. Newman and Bressett decided to make use of the delay by printing a few copies of the book and distributing them to selected numismatists at the joint American Numismatic Association-Canadian Numismatic Association convention in Detroit scheduled for August 15-18, 1962. The cream of American and Canadian numismatists would be in attendance, a perfect opportunity to hand out the books to thoughtful readers who could provide advertisement “blurbs” to Whitman, or write reviews of *Fantastic* for numismatic periodicals. Bressett would attend the convention; Newman would not, for he was scheduled to travel to Cleveland on business for his employer, Edison Brothers Stores, a leading retailer of women’s footwear.

In late July, Bressett learned that one of the educational presentations at the Convention, by the English dealer David Spink and the American dealer James Risk, would be entitled “New Facts on an Old American Coin.” Bressett was informed that the 1804 dollar would figure in the talk, but did not know just how groundbreaking this information would prove to be.

Just before Bressett left for Detroit, the shipment of brown Kivar™ arrived at Whitman’s printing plant in Hannibal, Missouri. This made it possible to bind 16 copies of the book, with the title in silver lettering on the cover, and to box and ship them to Bressett at the Convention venue, the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel in Detroit, with delivery to be made the morning of Friday, August 17, 1962. Little did either of the authors realize that, by then, their new book would be completely obsolete.

The ANA’s Glenn B. Smedley had arranged for four educational programs to be offered on the evening of Thursday, August 16, with each presentation to span a half-hour. According to Smedley’s report in the October 1962 issue of *The Numismatist*, first up was “Lt. Col. Ostiguy” of Ottawa, Canada, who spoke on “Three Great Military Orders of North America.” The second speaker was “Mrs. H. G. (Lois) Cole, “[who] charmed the group with her delightful Southern accent in speaking on ‘Numismatics and the Secret Service.’” Next came Charles Hoskins, the Assistant Director of the National Bank of Detroit’s Money Museum, who traced the development of

Mr. Kenneth Bressett  
Whitman Publishing Co  
1220 Mound St.  
Racine, Wisc.

Cleveland, Ohio  
Aug. 17, 1962  
5 AM

Dear Kent:

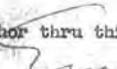
Thank you for the telephone call reporting the highlights of the talk of Dave Spink at the ANA Convention. I apologize for calling you at 3 AM insisting that the "Fantastic" book not be completed or released in its present form. I think it is very lucky that the book is not distributed. A needle in a hay stack has been found. You knew of the subject of the speech but your lips were sealed. I did not know the subject but I tried to find out.

I know that you realize that if the book is released now it will reflect terribly on the reputation of Whitman, you personally, The EPN Num.Ed.Soc. and myself. It may even be libelous to publish erroneous material. Knowing it to be inaccurate in major respects is not justifiable. Errata inserts in my opinion are out of the question and a sure way to get poor reviews and comments and not to sell the book.

The book must be revised. Most chapters are perfectly OK. It will sell very much better with the impact of Spink's material. Now it is really timely whereas up to now it had to a degree lost its punch. Raise the price if you wish. Your firm can make more money out of it if corrected than if it had already been published.

Meet me in St. Louis, Louie next weekend and by then I will have revisions to go over with you. Pages can be added as 12A 12B 12C 12D etc where needed if you wish to avoid remaking certain plates. Find out all about what pages are in what binding group/. Please send me the text of the talk, get the pictures and we will come out of this smelling like a rose. I will bless Whitman for its past delays instead of needling them or did you have a premonition. I didn't sleep a wink after you called but now I have a smile of contentment on my face as I sing (slightly out of tune) "There'll be some changes made". Luck is really with us. Tell me how to mail Mary and I will do it with you every hour on the hour.

Your coauthor thru thick & thin,

  
Eric P. Newman

cc: to KB at  
Sheraton Cadillac Hotel  
Detroit, Michigan

Newman's follow up letter to Bressett's "Stop the presses!" phone call on August 16, 1962.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens' coin designs. Fourth and finally, "David F. Spink of London, England, provided the thrilling climax by announcing the discovery of a new 1804 Silver Dollar." Spink's slide-illustrated lecture revealed the existence of a 15<sup>th</sup> 1804 dollar, which was part of a proof set that had been delivered by Edmund Roberts to the King of Siam, and which had been consigned to Spink by the descendants of Anna Leonowens, *the Anna of Anna and the King of Siam* and *The King and I* fame.

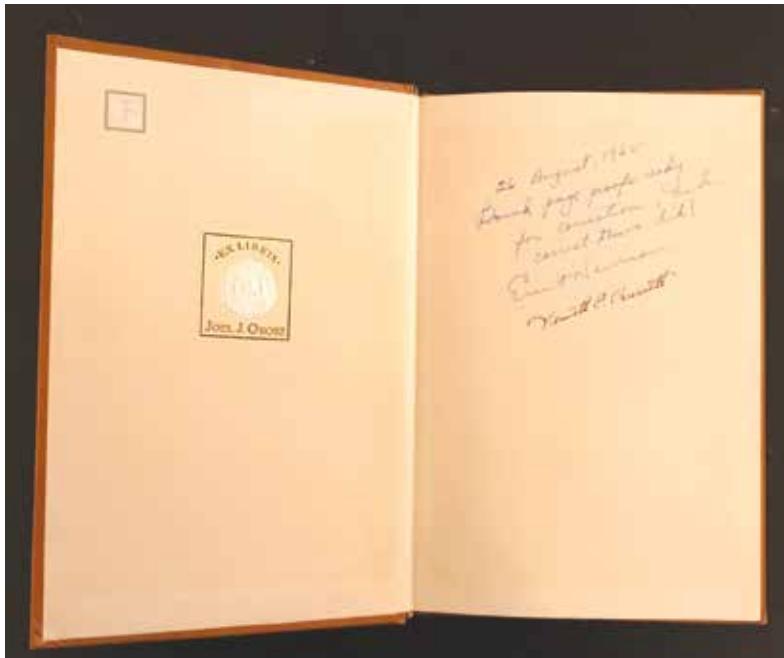
The concussion from this bombshell revelation rocked no one in the room more than Ken Bressett. Not only had the census of 1804 dollars increased by one heretofore unknown specimen, the diplomatic gift story was now a fact, not a delusion. Once Spink's lecture was completed, Bressett rushed to the nearest pay telephone, and called the printing plant in Hannibal to literally say "Stop the presses!" His next call was to co-author Eric Newman in Cleveland, informing him that their book was now outdated and, in the case of the diplomatic gift, erroneous. A revision, was definitely in order. Thus closed an eventful August 16.

Friday, August 17, for the co-authors at least, began very early. Eric Newman, sleepless after getting the late evening call from Bressett, returned the favor by ringing up his writing partner at the unseasonable hour of 3 a.m. Newman's urgent purpose in calling so early in the day was to make absolutely certain that *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* would not be published in its current form. Newman followed up with a letter to Bressett, written at the more civilized hour of 5 a.m. He summarized their 3 a.m. conversation, and reiterated that the book must be *revised*: not merely corrected with a separately printed errata sheet; instead all affected sections must be rewritten. He then invited Bressett to visit him—as he put it, "meet me in St. Louie, Louie"—on the weekend of August 25-26, to make the needed revisions. Newman closed his early-morning missive by writing "I didn't sleep a wink after you called, but now I have a smile of contentment on my face, as I sing (slightly out of tune), 'There'll be some changes made'."

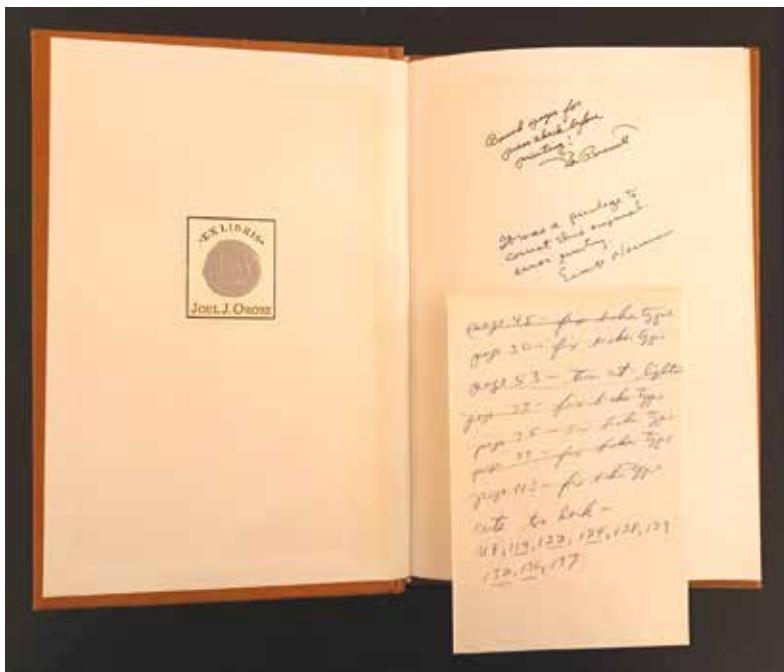
Before changes could be made, however, Ken Bressett needed to decide the disposition of the 16 review copies that were about to be delivered to him in Detroit on the morning of August 17. Bressett readily grasped that, while now unsuitable for publication in their current form, they had been instantly transformed into collector's items. Almost as soon as they arrived, D. Wayne (Dick) Johnson, the founding (and recently fired) editor of *Coin World*, confirmed Bressett's insight by asking for a copy of the book.

According to Johnson's reminiscences in the Fall 2001 issue of *The Asylum*, Bressett inscribed a copy of the first printing to him on the morning of August 17. Johnson, as it happened, was flying back home to Kansas City that day, with a layover scheduled in St. Louis. He knew that Eric Newman was in Cleveland, but planning to fly back home to St. Louis. Johnson, therefore, volunteered to take a copy of the first printing to Newman, and telephoned Newman to meet him at the St. Louis airport. At their rendezvous in St. Louis, Johnson delivered Newman's copy, and Newman in turn inscribed Johnson's copy. Thus Dick Johnson secured the only copy of the first printing signed by both co-authors on the first day of issue.

At least two other copies of the first printing were presented, and presumably inscribed, by Bressett during the ANA convention in Detroit. Correspondence from



John J. Ford, Jr. example, Orosz copy #1 in the census.



The Whitman "shop dummy," Orosz copy #2 in the census.

the Newman files reveals that one recipient, appropriately enough, was David Spink, whose presentation of August 16 had made the first printing obsolete. Bressett recalls presenting another copy to Lois Cole, another August 16 presenter.

Meanwhile, when Newman returned home from the airport on August 17, he found two additional copies of the first printing waiting for him, having been shipped via special delivery directly from the Whitman printing plant in Hannibal. As of August 17, 1962, therefore, there were 18 bound copies of the first printing in existence. There were also additional unbound copies awaiting Bressett after he returned from the Detroit Convention, as he recalled in an article in the Summer 2001 issue of *The Asylum*:

When the dust had settled, a press foreman asked me what I wanted to do with the sheets that had been printed prior to stopping the press run. I arranged to have a few copies of the unpublished book bound for archives and friends. As I recall, there were about 20 to 24 copies made, and the rest of the sheets were destroyed.

The final tally of first printings created is 16 sent to Bressett in Detroit; 2 sent to Newman in St. Louis, and 20-24 cased-in at Bressett's request, for a grand total of 38 to 42 bound copies. Of these, at least a half dozen fulfilled their originally-intended purpose of review volumes, for both Newman and Bressett used multiple copies to make revisions, both during and after their weekend meeting in St. Louis on August 25-26. One of Bressett's copies, which he referred to as the "house dummy," served as editing template for printer Dan DeLaporte after Bressett sent it to him, along with a cover letter dated September 7, 1962.

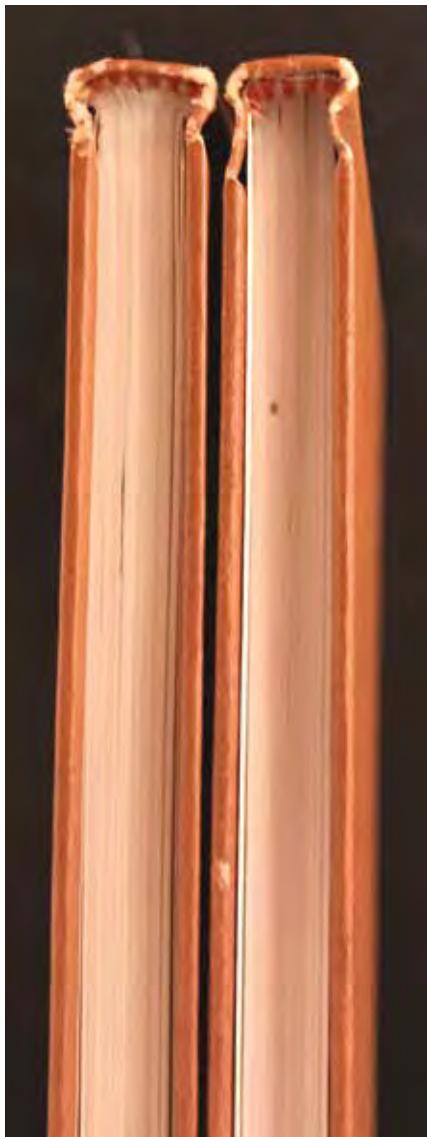
The majority of first printing copies were sent to notable numismatists, not for review, but rather as mementoes of a great work of research, and of a last moment correction that cemented its status as the definitive work on the subject. The co-authors laid the groundwork for these presentations during their St. Louis weekend meeting, inscribing at least 5 copies as follows: "26 August 1962 Bound Page Proofs in need of correction, and correct them we did." They then added their signatures. These copies were distributed as gifts to prominent numismatists, including John J. Ford, Jr.

Newman experienced some ambivalence about the appeal of an obsolete book to numismatic bibliophiles, writing to Bressett on September 10, 1962: "It is ridiculous for this to become a collector's item, but I suspect that it might be." Yet, in that very letter, Newman made two requests of Bressett:

I would like to have six more copies of the original 'booboo' printing of "The Fantastic." Please endorse each one of these copies with the words "bound page proofs in need of correction" and sign your name.

Even Eric P. Newman had to concede that collectors of numismatic literature were not to be denied.

The major revisions to the first printing were concentrated in a couple of chapters, but had to be completed under pressure of a short publishing deadline. Eric Newman joked about the strain in a letter to Bressett of September 2, conveying the latest edits, which he signed as "Your exhausted Newmanismatist." These changes were



Top-down view of the text blocks of the two printings; second printing on the left (curved) and first printing on the right (flat). The authors acknowledge P. Scott Rubin for this observation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	7
Table of Contents	9
List of Illustrations	10
Introduction	13
I. The Official Records	15
II. Discontinuance of Dollar Coinage	20
III. Disappearance Stories	24
IV. Changes in Coin Production Methods between 1804 and 1838	27
V. Distinctive Characteristics of 1804 Dollars	35
VI. Distinctive Characteristics of Proof 1801, 1802, and 1803 Dollars	45
VII. Characteristics Common to 1804 and to Proof 1801, 1802, and 1803 Dollars	51
VIII. The Origin of 1804 "Originals"	62
IX. The Diplomatic Gift Delusion	68
X. The Exchange between Stickney and the U.S. Mint	71
XI. The Scandal of 1858	75
XII. Aftermath of the Scandal	84
XIII. The Battle Begins	90
XIV. Affiliates and Opinions about the 1804	95
XV. What Are the Proof 1801, 1802, and 1803 Dollars?	100
XVI. Alterations and Other Fakes	103
XVII. The 1804 Half Dollar Alteration	109
XVIII. Summary	111
XIX. The Pedigree History	115
Appendix	138
Index	143

9

Table of contents from the first printing, with chapter 9, "The Diplomatic Gift Delusion"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	7
List of Illustrations	10
Introduction	13
I. The Official Records	15
II. Discontinuance of Dollar Coinage	20
III. Disappearance Stories	24
IV. Changes in Coin Production Methods after 1804	27
V. Distinctive Characteristics of 1804 Dollars	35
VI. Distinctive Characteristics of Proof 1801, 1802, and 1803 Dollars	45
VII. Characteristics Common to 1804 and to Proof 1801, 1802, and 1803 Dollars	51
VIII. The Diplomatic Gift Background	62
IX. The Origin of 1804 "Originals"	66
X. The Exchange between Stickney and the U.S. Mint	71
XI. The Scandal of 1858	75
XII. Aftermath of the Scandal	84
XIII. The Battle Begins	90
XIV. Affiliates and Opinions about the 1804	95
XV. What Are the Proof 1801, 1802, and 1803 Dollars?	100
XVI. Alterations and Other Fakes	103
XVII. The 1804 Half Dollar Alteration	109
XVIII. Summary	111
XIX. The Pedigree History	115
Appendix	138
Index	143

9

Table of contents from the second printing, with chapter 8, "The Diplomatic Gift Background"

completed by September 7, 1962, and the second printing (also known as the “regular edition”), was at last ready to go to press. Finally, on October 1, *The Fantastic 1804 Silver Dollar* was offered for sale, with a press run of 8,000 copies. In brown Kivar™ covers, octavo in size, and with the title imprinted in silver letters upon the cover (but not the spine), *Fantastic*’s second printing has become the standard reference on its subject, and more than that, an essential volume for any library of American numismatic literature.

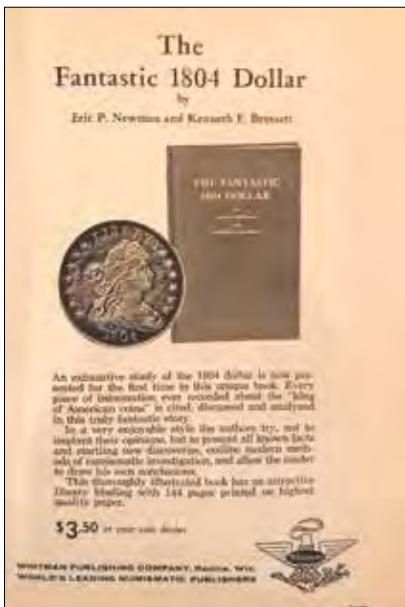
As for the first printing, it is appropriate to give the last word to Ken Bressett. On October 3, 1962, Bressett sent “associate in research” Lynn Glaser five copies of the second printing and a single copy of the first. In the cover letter, he explained the genesis of the first printing, and closed with a statement that has been proven prophetic: “Only a few dozen of the press sheets were bound and very few of these books have been given out, and no doubt they will be considered a great rarity someday.”

## *Diagnostics of the First Printing of The Fantastic 1804 Dollar*

The two printings of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* appear to be identical upon first examination. Both are the same octavo size, have the same page count, and both are bound in the same brown Kivar™ with plain spines and silver lettering on the front cover. There are, however, many differences between the two printings, mostly consisting of editorial changes difficult to track and tedious to catalog. Four of these differences, however, are readily observable and serve as definitive diagnostic points in order to distinguish between the two printings:

1. In the first printing, Chapter VIII is entitled “The Origin of the 1804 ‘Originals’” In the second printing, Chapter VIII is entitled “The Diplomatic Gift Background”
2. In the first printing, Chapter IX is entitled “The Diplomatic Gift Delusion” In the second printing, Chapter IX is entitled “The Origin of 1804 ‘Originals’”
3. In the first printing, there is no plate on p. 70. In the second printing, there is a plate of the King of Siam proof set on p. 70.
4. In the first printing, the text block, when viewed from the top of the spine, is bound flat. In the second printing, the text block, when viewed from the top of the spine, is bound with a pronounced curve. (The authors thank P. Scott Rubin for bringing this diagnostic distinction to our attention).

As noted, there were three different deliveries of the first printing. The first delivery consisted of 16 copies sent to Ken Bressett in Detroit, received the morning of August 17, 1962. The second delivery consisted of two copies sent to Eric P. Newman in St. Louis, received the evening of August 17, 1962. The third delivery comprised 20-24 copies, sent to Ken Bressett in Racine, Wisconsin, the week following the 1962 ANA convention (the work week of August 20-24, 1962). No effort was made when binding these copies to distinguish among them, and no effort was made to keep track



Whitman Publishing advertisement from the time of issue.

of the copies which made up each delivery. It is therefore impossible to determine whether an individual surviving copy was originally among the first, second, or third deliveries, unless additional evidence allows for a definitive determination. Three copies meet this criterion. The first belongs to Dick Johnson, inscribed by both authors on the date of first issue, August 17, 1962, and thus one of the 16 included in the first delivery. The second was presented to David Spink by Ken Bressett, at the Detroit ANA convention, and thus another of the "Detroit 16." The third was presented to Lois Cole by Bressett in Detroit. The present ownership of the last two copies is not known.

There are two different clusters of dated inscriptions. All copies dated 26 August, 1962, were inscribed by Newman and Bressett during their "revision weekend" in St. Louis, August 25-26, 1962. At least four copies are dated September 12, 1962, and appear to have been inscribed thus by Bressett in response to a September 10 letter from Newman in which Newman asked for six inscribed copies of "the original booboo printing of 'The Fantastic.'" While the dates themselves are unequivocal, it is impossible to determine whether these inscribed copies were originally part of the first, second, or third deliveries.

*The Authors wish to thank Kenneth Bressett and Kellen Hoard for reviewing this article prior to publication, and for making helpful corrections and suggestions for improvement.*

### *Known examples:*

**Len Augburger.** Kolbe 138 (1/10/2015), lot 298, realized \$500. Reappears in Kolbe 143 (10/21/2016), lot 214, realized \$475. Signed by both authors and inscribed by Newman "Bound page proofs ready for correction, and correct them we did!"

**Ken Bressett (1).** Desk copy with annotations handwritten by Bressett. Bears the notation "60 pages with changes, 84 no changes needed." Autographed by Bressett.

**Ken Bressett (2).** Inscribed "This is a copy of the first printing of this book / made just prior to the appearance of the / 1804 dollar presented to the King of Siam. / That discovery caused the text to be rewritten. / Only about 12 copies of this edition were saved, / the rest of the printing was destroyed. / (signed) Ken Bressett." Bressett believes this copy was given to his parents, and that the count of "12" was in error (cf. the Phil Bressett copy, which is similarly inscribed).

**Ken Bressett (3).** Inscribed by Newman to Bressett “To Kenneth E. Bressett / One of my greatest pleasures / was to work with you in / this research, even to the / last frustrating moment of / correcting the page proof into / a finished piece of work. / I hope when the book is / published you will derive / sincere enjoyment from / the appreciation which I am / sure many will show. / You brought us together. / No one could do this job / alone. / (signed) Eric P. Newman / St. Louis / Aug. 26. 1962.”

**Ken Bressett (4).** Inscribed by Newman “August, 1962 / Bound page proofs / ready for correction, / and correct them we did! / (signed) Eric P. Newman / (signed) Kenneth E. Bressett.”

**Ken Bressett (5, 6).** Two copies in new condition, signed by Bressett.

**Ken Bressett (7).** One copy in new condition, signed by Bressett and Newman.

The Ken Bressett library also includes a number of related items:

- Two sets of trimmed individual pages from the first printing, signed by Bressett. One marked X on flyleaf.
- Full set of individual cut pages, annotated in Newman’s hand, with notes and additional information attached. Likely intended for Bressett’s use in applying Newman initial edits.
- One set of blank pages bound in a blank case, which was a set-up piece for the casing machine operation.
- “Fat boy” consisting of individual cut sheets pasted in a book of blank pages, bound in an unstamped, oversized Kivar™ casing. The front end-sheet is marked A5060.

**Philip Bressett** Inscribed from Ken Bressett “For my son Philip / This is a copy of the first printing of this book / made just prior appearance of the / 1804 dollar presented to the King of Siam. / That discovery caused the text to be rewritten. / Only about 12 copies of this edition were saved, / the rest of the printing was destroyed. / (signed) Ken Bressett / February 1, 1978.” Ken Bressett now feels the count of 12 was incorrect, and that 42 was intended. The Philip Bressett copy is stored in a brown paper wrapper that is marked, in Ken’s hand, “This is the very special edition / - only about 40 printed -.”

**Lois Cole** Ken Bressett recalled giving a copy to Lois Cole, who participated in the 1962 ANA Convention Thursday evening education program, along with David Spink and James Risk, and spoke on the topic of “Numismatists and the Secret Service.” It is unknown if Bressett signed this copy, though it seems likely.

**Mark Ferguson (1).** Ex. George Kolbe, c. 2000. Signed by Bressett only, under his name on the title page.

**Mark Ferguson (2).** Ex. Phil Bressett, c. 2012. Inscribed on front flyleaf “Bound page proofs / ready for correction, / and correct them we did! / (signed) Eric P. Newman / (signed) Kenneth E. Bressett.”

Ferguson further owns two unopened “six packs” of the regular edition, Whitman stock no. 9376.

**Lyn Glaser.** Correspondence from Bressett to Glaser, 10/3/1962, transmits one copy of the first printing and five copies of the second printing. It is possible this duplicates another entry in this list, though it seems likely Bressett would have inscribed this to Glaser. Bressett, in the correspondence to Glaser, notes “only a few dozen of the press sheets were bound and very few of these books have been given out, and no doubt they will be considered a great rarity someday.”

**Dan Hamelberg (1).** Kolbe 26 (6/9/1986), lot 475, realized \$250. Inscribed by both authors to Mike Powills, catalogued by Kolbe as one of 16 extant. Newman wrote to Powills on 11/16/1965 “The 1804 books are being sent under separate cover.” Whether this included the present copy is unclear, but it seems likely, as Powills had previously requested Newman’s signature on other Newman publications.

**Dan Hamelberg (2).** Hamelberg noted this copy in *E-Sylum*, 1/22/2017. Inscribed “August, 1962. Bound page proofs ready for correction, and correct them we did!”

**Dan Hamelberg (3).** Newman XI (11/7/2018), lot 15354, realized \$900. Inscription from Bressett to Newman on front flyleaf, 8/26/1962. On the reverse of the front board Eric writes in part “By August 26, 1962 all the changes to 60 pages had been written up by me, but the book was not ready for sale until October, 1962.”

Hamelberg also acquired Newman’s second printing working copy, which Newman maintained for the purposes of recording corrections and clarifications (Heritage Auctions Newman XI, 11/7/2018, lot 15358, realized \$1,560).

**Tom Harrison.** Ex. Newman XI (11/7/2018), lot 15356, realized \$192, later in Kolbe 152 (4/27/2019), lot 300, realized \$200. “Bound page proofs / in need of correction / Sept. 12, 1962” in Ken’s hand, signed by both authors. Per email of 5/26/2020 from Harrison to Orosz/Augsburger.

**Wayne Homren.** Ex. Kolbe #56, 7/1993, lot 243, realized \$130. Bottom corners very slightly bumped, otherwise nice, clean copy with no distinguishing marks. Described in the Kolbe sale catalog as “Inscribed on the front flyleaf: Bound page proofs/in need of correction/Sept. 12,1962/(signed) Kenneth E. Bressett.” However, the copy is also signed by Newman. Lot 244 in this sale was a second printing copy, inscribed by Bressett to David Spink (realized \$70).

Homren further owns an important copy of the regular edition signed by all four of the authors and contributors (Newman, Bressett, Breen, Glaser). Wayne notes “Lynn [Glaser] was really surprised when I reached him by phone but let me ship it to him for his signature. Ken [Bressett] thinks I probably have the only signed pair in existence.” The ‘signed pair’ refers to Wayne’s ownership of both a signed first printing, and a signed second printing.

**Dick Johnson.** Described by Johnson in the 1/22/2017 edition of *E-Sylum*:

“My copy is unique in that mine was autographed by three numismatists

ON THE FIRST DAY IT WAS ISSUED (or available).

A shipment of 16 books was sent to Ken Bressett at the ANA convention in Detroit. He received these on August 17, 1962. He gave me a copy and I mentioned I was flying home to Kansas City with an hour between planes in St. Louis. If Eric could meet me at the airport I would deliver his copy to him. He did and I had him sign my copy right under Ken's inscription. I signed mine when I got home to KC. Three signatures in three cities all on the same day!

But that's not the end of the story. On May 29, 2011 I had Eric add a second comment and signature on the facing sheet inside the cover."

Newman wrote to Johnson August 27, 1962 " 'The Fantastic' has been completely re-written and there are major changes on over sixty pages. The set of bound page proofs which you have ought to be referred to as the 'boo-boo' edition." Johnson responded on 9/10/1962, alluding to their airport meeting, and congratulated Newman on the book and commented on other matters.

**Vladimir Clain-Stefanelli.** Correspondence from Vladimir Clain-Stefanelli to Bressett, 11/29/1962, thanks him for sending two copies, one of which is the first printing, while the other, presumably, was a copy of the second printing. This first printing copy could not be located by Jennifer Gloede, Museum Specialist at National Numismatic Collection (NNC). Gloede confirmed two copies in the NNC library, a second printing example from 1962, and a 2009 edition. A plausible theory is that Clain-Stefanelli regarded the first printing as a curiosity and did not accession it into the library.

**Andy Newman.** Ex. Eric P. Newman, undated and inscribed in Eric's hand "Bound page proofs / ready for correction, / and correct them we did! / (signed) Eric P. Newman / (signed) Kenneth E. Bressett." Newman also owns a copy of the second printing, inscribed by Eric P. Newman to Andy and dated October 1962.

**Eric P. Newman (1).** Remaining in the Newman library at Washington University in St. Louis. Flyleaf annotated in pencil by Newman "Cut and interlined page proof / Corrections were made in next printing." Extensive corrections in Newman's hand in the summary (chapter 18).

**Eric P. Newman (2).** Remaining in the Newman library at Washington University in St. Louis. Flyleaf annotated in blue ink by Newman "cut page proof." Detached front and rear boards with about half of the front board missing.

The Newman papers also contain three *unbound* page proofs of the first printing, marked in purple inkstamps "1<sup>st</sup> PROOF MAR 26 1962," "2<sup>nd</sup> PROOF APR 22 1962," and "1<sup>st</sup> PROOF JUN 25 1962."

**Newman XI.** Heritage Auctions (11/7/2018), lot 15920, realized \$156. Cataloged by David Fanning, "This copy is in the original brown paper wrapping as received from the publisher, onto which has been written 'Fantastic Bound Page Proof.' It has not been opened to verify this, but it was stored with three other copies, with the group being labeled 'The Rare Unpublished Edition before the error on diplomatic gifts

was corrected.” Two of the copies were unwrapped and were indeed the bound page proofs. Caveat emptor.”

**Newman XI.** Heritage Auctions (11/7/2018), lot 15921, realized \$192. Same as last, in wrapper.

**Newman XI.** Heritage Auctions (11/7/2018), lot 15922, realized \$104. Cataloged as “first edition.” Inscribed by Ken Bressett on the front flyleaf and dated Sept. 12, 1962. Boards bowed and rear cover a bit creased from being bent.

**Joel J. Orosz (1).** Ex. Kolbe 93, 6/1/2004 (John J. Ford, Jr. Library Part I), lot 706, realized \$370. Orosz accession number 04.77.2. Front flyleaf blue ink annotation in Newman’s hand, “26 August 1962 Bound page proofs ready for correction, and correct them we did! (signed) Eric P. Newman.” Beneath is Ken Bressett’s signature in black ink.

Eric Newman wrote to Ford on 8/30/1962, “As I told you, I have a copy of the uncorrected and bound page proofs for your library which you may have when the released publication is out.” Ford responded to Newman on 9/6/1962 “I certainly look forward to receiving both the ‘original’ version of the 1804 Dollar book, as well as the corrected version. I hope that you give me the first with a suitable inscription, as I feel this will be a real (numismatic bibliophile) collectors item in the years to come.”

**Joel J. Orosz (2).** Ex. Charles Davis, sold by Davis to Orosz at the 2007 ANA. Orosz accession number 07.81.1. At the time of the 2007 purchase, it was not inscribed, and had no bookplate. It was annotated, in Bressett’s hand, in blue, and occasionally, black ink, with instructions for the printer (too light, too dark, broken type, etc.), on pp. 27, 29, 35, 43, 44, 45, 50, 53, 58, 73, 75, 97, 111, 115, 118, 119, 122, 124, 128, 129, 132, 136, 137. Also laid in the book is a 4 by 6 inch piece of unlined paper, of stationery weight, which contains information and instructions for the printer, written in blue ink in Bressett’s hand on both sides, one side in portrait orientation, the other side in landscape orientation (see attached scan for contents). On 8/9/2007 Orosz attended a Numismatic Theater presentation conducted by Bressett and asked him to sign this sheet, which he did in black ink, “Ken Bressett.” At this time Bressett also signed first flyleaf in black ink: “Bound pages for press check before printing! Ken Bressett” Beneath that inscription, in blue ink, in EPN’s hand, is “It was a pleasure to correct this original error printing Eric P. Newman” The latter inscription was secured at the Newman residence in spring 2008, when Orosz was conducting research for *The Secret History of the First United States Mint*. In the middle of the inside front board is Orosz’s “Eid Mar” bookplate.

This copy is clearly the “shop dummy” used by Bressett to make corrections, as referred to in Ken’s letter to Dan DeLaporte on 9/6/1962 and was sent for reference by Bressett to DeLaporte on 9/7/1962, along with two other copies of the first printing. Since the shop dummy got into commercial hands, it seems likely the other two copies did, as well.

**Neil Shafer.** From Ken Bressett at the time of publication, per email from Neil Shafer to Augsburger, 6/30/2020.

**Michael Sullivan.** Newman XI (11/7/2018), lot 15355, realized \$288. Inscribed in Bressett's hand "Bound page proofs / in need of correction / September 12, 1962 / (signed) Kenneth E. Bressett / (signed) Eric P. Newman."

**James Risk.** Correspondence from Risk to Bressett, 9/5/1962, thanks Ken for sending him a copy of the first printing, which Risk refers to as a "bibliographic rarity." It is possible this duplicates another entry in this list, though it seems likely Bressett would have inscribed this to Risk personally. Risk originally wrote to Bressett on 8/24/1962, requesting a "specimen" copy of the book. Risk commented further on this copy in correspondence to Newman, 9/4/1962:

The rainy part of this weekend was devoted to the rare uncorrected edition of 'The Fantastic 1804 Dollar' Ken Bressett was kind enough to give me. Let me say that I do not recollect any numismatic publication which has given me more satisfaction and sheer pleasure to read. You have done a magnificent piece of work and I am glad that the 1834 set came to light just in time to permit certain basic additions.

**P. Scott Rubin.** Ex. Kolbe #43, 2/2/1990, lot 435, realized \$160. Originally from Bressett to R. Byron White, inscribed by Bressett to "the Whites" and dated 12/25/1974. Also present is the top half of a letter from Bressett, on Western Publishing Company stationery, dated 1/3/1975. Bressett notes the first edition was destroyed except for about 24 copies. The book contains a more recent inscription added by Eric P. Newman for Scott Rubin, "Saved by the bell." Bressett presented White at least one other book, a copy of Newman's *Early Paper Money of America* (Davis, 12/1/2012, lot 183).

**David Spink.** Correspondence from Spink to Bressett, 8/21/1962, acknowledges receipt of a "rare first edition" presented by Bressett at the ANA convention. One of the "Detroit sixteen" made available to Bressett at the 1962 ANA Detroit convention. Spink wrote to Newman on September 11, "He [Bressett] very kindly gave me one of the few advance copies...which I read on the journey back to England at the end of the Convention with the greatest interest. Indeed, I would like to congratulate you most warmly on this magnificent production..." This copy is presumably inscribed to Spink, though this is not confirmed.

### *Unmatched Auction Appearances:*

Sklow 10/1/1983, lot 379. Prices realized list indicates lot was withdrawn.

Kolbe 38 (12/10/1988), lot 61, realized \$160. No identifying marks listed.

Kolbe 93 (6/1/2004), lot 707, realized \$450. John J. Ford, Jr. library. Inscribed on front flyleaf "26 August 1962, Bound page proofs in need of corrections – and correct them we did! (signed) Kenneth E. Bressett." This lot also included a second printing inscribed by Bressett to Ford, 9/28/1962.

Fanning II [Kolbe and Fanning 114] (6/4/2009), lot 225, realized \$265. Inscribed by Bressett of front flyleaf "This is a set of bound page proofs of the text before the final

changes were made in August of 1962.”

Sklow 8 (10/3/2009), lot 678, realized \$425. Signed on the front endpaper by Newman and Bressett.

Davis (10/17/2009), lot 291, realized \$550. Signed on title page by both authors. Davis comments “It is a tribute to both authors that page proofs from this printing were bound and not buried.”

Kolbe 126 (10/4/2012), lot 919, realized \$300. No identifying marks listed.

Kolbe 137 (11/1/2014), lot 147, realized \$300. No identifying marks listed.

Kolbe 148 (1/13/2018), lot 435, realized \$500. Bill Burd sale. No identifying marks listed.

Kolbe 149 (4/28/2018), lot 450, did not sell. Ex. Lincoln W. Higbie III. A couple light scuffs, else fine.

Kolbe 150 (7/14/2018), lot 278, did not sell. John W. Adams sale. No identifying marks listed.

## **Chronicle and Census of the ‘Initial Printing’ of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar Books***

*As recalled by the co-author and publisher, Kenneth Bressett—May 2020*

The mysterious 1804 dollar has intrigued and baffled investigators for centuries. When I first attempted to learn why and how these coins were made, and what made them so valuable, I was stymied by lack of reliable information, or even a basic understanding of their nature. The first piece of useful information I found appeared in R.S. Yeoman’s 1942 first edition of *The Handbook of United States Coins*. The listing for 1804 dollars was described there as ‘Type 1, and Type 2’, stating that this was “the first time this fact has been mentioned.”

Subsequent research has revealed that a great deal of information and speculation has been around ever since the coins were first made. Most of it was conjecture or deception that has largely been put to rest through contemporary investigation, especially through the efforts of the team that produced the book aptly called *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* written by Eric P. Newman and Kenneth E. Bressett.

At the time of writing and publishing the book it never occurred to us that we might someday become a party to actually adding to the mystery by an unimaginable quirk of fate. Yet, that happened when work on the book was essentially finished and ready to go to press. Now, herewith a new team of researchers are attempting to chronicle the events leading to what might be called an aborted, mysterious edition of a book that was never intended to be published.

In early July 1962, our work on the 1804 dollar book was finished and in the final stages of being ready for press-time scheduling. Around the middle of the month we received word that there would be a slight delay because of a difficulty in obtaining

the right kind of Kivar™ material for making the covers. This, however should not have delayed printing, and with a sense of relief I went forth with my plans to attend the annual summer convention of the American Numismatic Association being held next month in Detroit, Michigan.

What ensued next was a publisher's nightmare. Near the end of July, I learned that a prominent London coin dealer, David Spink, and an American, James Risk, had discovered some new information about the dollars and would be presenting a talk on the subject at the August convention. Naturally I was eager to hear their talk because I knew and respected both of them. The title of their talk was 'New Facts About an Old American Coin.'

The gist of their talk was the discovery of a new specimen of the dollar, and being able to trace it to the King of Siam. It was absolute proof of our theory about when and why the coins were made in 1834 and needed to be added to the book to make it complete.

Immediately after the lecture I ran out of the room, directly to a pay telephone to call the factory and actually yell "stop the press!" There was much new information to be added to the story. The Western Printing and Lithographing (parent company of Whitman Publishing in 1962) production team was understanding and granted us another month or so to complete the project. The work was finished in record time and the revised books shipped on October 1, 1962.

When the dust had settled, a press foreman asked me what I wanted to do with the sheets that had been printed prior to stopping the press run. I arranged to have a few copies of the unpublished books bound for archives and friends. As I recall, there were about 20 to 24 copies made, and the rest of the sheets were destroyed. A number of them were immediately sent to Newman for his use. Most of the others were later distributed as gifts to those who were involved with the original research. A few, but certainly not all of them, were autographed by Newman and myself. Others were either left unsigned or individually inscribed to recipients by either of us.

The so-called 'first edition' copies of *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* book are not identified on the cover or inside to distinguish them from the published version. They are, however, readily distinguishable by the changes in chapter IX that was re-titled 'The Origin of 1804 'Originals'', and many other additions. As near as I can recall there were minor or major changes to at least 60 pages.

Both Newman and I saved several copies of the original printing. Two or three of mine are crammed full of notes and handwritten changes that were needed for the revision. I also have one set of individual cut pages, and a dummy copy with pasted-up pages. In all, I have a total of 5 that I call 'working' copies. I am pretty sure that Newman must have had very similar items because we were exchanging mock-up copies and prototype pages as we worked through the process of revising and adding new material.

In addition to those unique examples, I have the following pristine copies: 2 autographed by Newman and Bressett; 1 autographed by Bressett; and 2 unsigned.



# Good Manners for Today's Polite Coin Collector: A Cradle-to-Grave Handbook of Numismatic Etiquette

By Christopher R. McDowell

I received in the mail last month excerpts from Lincoln Vanderblatt's soon to be released book titled *Good Manners for Today's Polite Coin Collector: A Cradle-to-Grave Handbook of Numismatic Etiquette*, and feel compelled to share my excitement, which I can hardly contain. Dennis Tucker was able to obtain a handful of signed copies for Rittenhouse Society members, due, I assume, to his close association with the Vanderblatt family over the years. As everyone is by now aware, Lincoln is the only grandson and heir to the literary legacy of Archibald Vanderblatt. The discovery of Archibald's unpublished numismatic manuscripts and notes a few years ago caused quite a bit of excitement in numismatic literary circles on par with the discovery of Papa Hemingway's memoirs that same year.

Based on the few short chapters of the book shared with me, I can say that Lincoln is every bit the numismatic scholar and gentleman as his grandfather. While much of what Archibald wrote at the turn of the last century is as true today as it was then, certain aspects of his writings appeared to some to have grown stale with the advent of technology and changing social norms. In other words, an update of Archibald's classic work was needed to address such topics as cellphone etiquette, internet usage, email, etc., all of which were obviously not touched upon in the original 1911 publication. Lincoln, however, shows us that the axioms presented by his grandfather fit most every modern situation; they are timeless and comprehensive truisms. The lessons of this book also transcend numismatics. For example, Chapter 36 is titled "Polite Interaction With Others" (I note that the new chapter numbers do not follow precisely those of the 1911 book). While this chapter is intended to provide lessons on dealing with people within a numismatic context, the instruction is universal and the examples memorable. As the 1911 version is hard to find today, going for thousands of dollars when it appears at auction, I encourage Lincoln to continue his work and get this book into print and into as many people's hands as possible. The world would clearly be a better place if everyone would read and internalize the wisdom presented.



# Remembering Frank Katen

By Charles Sullivan

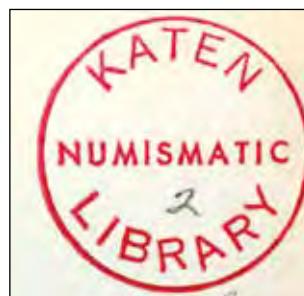
As a young numismatist in the 1960s I unknowingly internalized Aaron Feldman's admonition, "Buy the book before the coin," a headline he first used in 1966. Aaron was a coin dealer who operated out of a cubbyhole at 1220 Avenue of the Americas in Manhattan's diamond district. His tiny "shop," set amongst jewelry dealers, was once described by Dave Bowers as no more than "eight feet square." Nonetheless the lack of floorspace was scant impediment to promoting upwards of 25 books in his advertisements, which covered a wide range of specialized numismatic topics.

By the time I hit my twenties in the 1970s, I had become a semi-dedicated book collector to complement my pursuit of coins. The most prominent numismatic bookseller of the era was another coin dealer, Frank Katen (1903–2001) of Maryland. In 1969 he had advertised the "largest stock numismatic books in world." Once you got on Frank's mailing list, every 2–3 months his printed auction catalog would show up in your mailbox. His live auction sales were held in large hotels in conjunction with regional coins shows.

Bidding options were limited. The modern internet had yet to be invented. Fax machines were not commonplace, either. So normally one either had to show up at the auction or else remember to mail in their bid sheet early enough to allow for delivery and processing. I got into the bad habit of waiting until the last day or two and then being forced to telephone my bids (usually on 10–20 lots, all in the \$5–\$15



Left to right: Laurese Katen, Eva Adams (Director of U.S. Mint, 1961–1969), and Frank Katen, in the 1970s.



range). This procedure worked reasonably well until the occasion I called the day before the sale and Frank and his wife, Laurese, had already decamped for the show in Philadelphia. Their helpful office manager, Larry Pusey (who I believe was Laurese's son from a previous marriage) dutifully provided the phone number of the convention hotel. When I reached Frank in his room that evening, he could not have been more patient and gracious in recording my bids. I was not a big spender but Frank always treated me with kindness and professionalism. Louis Eliasberg I was not.

Normally I would win about 40%–60% of my bids. Sometimes I would have the books shipped. UPS would then deliver a heavy carton, with each volume carefully wrapped in heavy brown kraft paper. Other times I would visit his store on New Hampshire Avenue in a sleepy corner of Silver Spring, about 10 minutes outside the beltway. I don't remember much about the coins on display but I do recall the bookcases lining the wall being filled with many hundreds of used and new volumes. The store occupied a spot on the second floor of a Class C strip mall. In retrospect, his emporium reminded me of a secondhand wedding boutique closed every Wednesday. I am sure the rent was cheap and it was obvious Frank was not dependent on walk-up traffic.

My memories of Frank were triggered recently when I had sought the 1945 reprint of William West Bradbeer's *Confederate and Southern State Currency*. One eBay seller, a dealer in collectibles not related to numismatics, was offering a nice copy for \$56. On a lark, I turned to Amazon and found another copy, this one priced at \$15 from a dealer at AbeBooks, a large network of all-topics booksellers. In the dealer's writeup I learned that Frank J. Katen had once owned this copy as part of his personal library. It was an "Eric Newman" moment for me. A week later the book arrived. Frank (and presumably other owners) had taken nice care of the work. I will treasure the book for both its content and its provenance.

In doing my research for this article, it occurred to me Frank's specialization and success in numismatic literature may have inspired Aaron to incorporate the headline "Buy the book before the coin" in his promotions. I never met Aaron Feldman but I know I would have liked him. I did meet Frank Katen and my enjoyment of numismatics was enriched by the experience.



# 21 Years After Frost's *Encheiridion*: The Second American Book on Ancients

By David D. Gladfelter

In 1877 Robert Morris, LL.D. (Figure 1), erstwhile president and faculty member of the then-defunct Masonic University in La Grange, Kentucky, came out with a book about ancient Roman coins. He titled it *The Coins of the Twelve Caesars* (Figure 2).

He was not the first American to write such a book; that distinction would go to the Rev. Adolph Frost, an Episcopal priest in Burlington, New Jersey. Frost's book, short-titled *Encheiridion ad Illustrandum*,<sup>1</sup> with only a single known surviving example, was published in 1856 and dealt with a narrow topic: translating abbreviations occurring on Greek and Roman coins. Morris's, in contrast, was about the robust lives and coins of the rulers who had been so graphically and realistically portrayed by the contemporaneous Roman writer Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus. To this day Suetonius remains a popular writer, and his twelve "men of Rome" are consequently among the best known of ancient rulers.

Other American writers prior to Morris did discuss ancient coins as part of their general works on coins. The first 82 pages of James Ross Snowden's *A Description of Ancient and Modern Coins, in the Cabinet Collection at the Mint of the United States* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1860) were devoted to Greek and Roman coins. The first four chapters and first 20 plates of W. C. Prime's *Coins, Medals and Seals* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1861) concerned coins of ancient lands, with additional discussion of medieval coins. In *A Visit to the Cabinet of the United States Mint, at Philadelphia* (Lippincott, 1876), Elizabeth B. Johnston told of the Greek, Persian,



Figure 1: Robert Morris, LL.D.

1 Joel J. Orosz, "The Curious Tale of the *Encheiridion ad Illustrandum Interpretationem Abbreviationum in Graecis et Latinis Auctoribus*: The Most Obscure Great Rarity in US Numismatic Literature." *The Asylum* 26:97-102 (October-December 2008). The full title, in Latin as is much of the book, was therein translated as "Handbook for illustrating the interpretation of abbreviations occurring in Greek and Latin authors just as in the coins of both peoples, carefully and faithfully elaborated, and dedicated with the approval of the Bishop to the students of Burlington College, founded by him, and with the same approval to the students of the College of St. James in the diocese of Maryland, with best wishes, by Adolph Frost, priest of the holy Church of God."

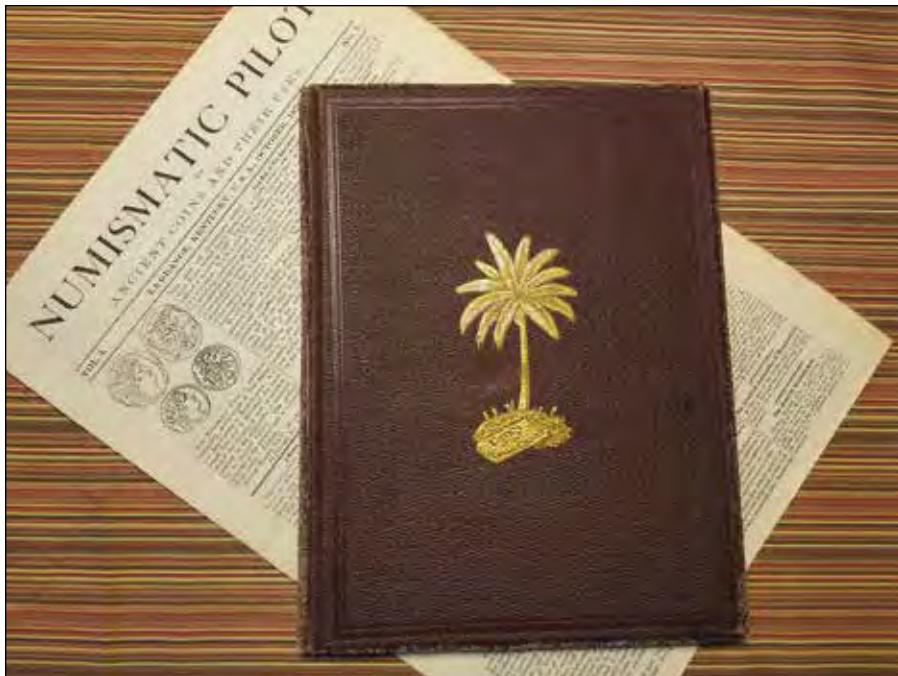


Figure 2: *The Coins of the Twelve Caesars*

Egyptian, Syrian and Roman coins on display there, as well as one “struck in the Philadelphia Mint at least two thousand years ago” (referring to a mint at Attilus Philadelphus in Asia Minor). So did writers in American periodicals, including Morris himself. American coin auctions in the 1860s and 1870s included a smattering of ancients, with two notable collections, those of Mortimer Mackenzie sold by Edward Cogan in 1869 and Edward Middleton sold by William Strobridge in 1874, coming to market in the form of plated catalogs.<sup>2</sup> So the field of ancient coins was not completely devoid of American scholarship as of 1877.

Morris, although an academic, was also a popularizer. Along with a now-rare paper covered version of his book<sup>3</sup> came a prospectus that said, in part:

I am prepared to furnish you with a duplicate copy of this book, neatly bound and enlarged by the addition of twelve manuscript pages, together with a full collection of the coins of the Twelve Caesars.<sup>4</sup>

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2 Adams 20 (rated A) and 19 (B+), respectively. In John W. Adams, *United States Numismatic Literature, Volume I, Nineteenth Century Auction Catalogs* (Mission Viejo: George Frederick Kolbe Publications, 1982). Cited by David F. Fanning, *Ancient Coins in Early American Auctions* (Newman Numismatic Portal Symposium presentation, August 29, 2020, online at [nnpssymposium.live/fanning620](http://nnpssymposium.live/fanning620)). This presentation was an advance discussion of Dr. Fanning's book of the same title, published in October 2020.

3 A copy of this version was offered as lot 32 in our Society's 2020 benefit auction, bringing \$90 on a \$50 estimate.

4 David Sklow, mail bid sale #8, lot 533.

Morris had made up 12-coin type sets, one each to go with every hardbound copy of his book to be sold, 100 in all. His plan was thereby “to introduce the science of ancient Numismatics into American study” by offering both text and coins to his readers, giving them “the privilege … of looking face to face upon those who have long occupied niches in the temple of History.” He hoped that the portraits on the coins would speak to his readers, bringing them “*en face* with historical persons” whose stories were told in the accompanying book.

Following an introduction, the book is made up of separate three-page summaries about each of the rulers, from Julius Caesar to Domitian, plus hand-drawn plates of selected examples of the coinage of each ruler, 217 images in all

(Figure 3). It is an introductory book, meant to pique the curiosity of persons uninformed of the details of ancient history and perhaps somewhat apprehensive of the technical aspects of sources about ancient numismatics then current. Nevertheless, it is informed by scholarship. In a selected bibliography Morris cites 34 sources, mostly British, none of course American. The sources include some that are occasionally consulted today – H. Noel Humphreys's *Coin Collector's Manual*, John Y. Akerman's *A Numismatic Manual*, J. Evelyn's *Numismata* and Fulvio Orsini's *Familiae Romanae* among them. All were in his personal library apparently numbering nearly 1,000 volumes, but still lacking “the great works of Cohen and Eckhel” which “have not yet found the places reserved for them.”

The “twelve manuscript pages” mentioned in Morris's prospectus are data sheets to be filled out by purchasers of the books and coin sets. Since the coins in each set varied, it was up to each purchaser to record the coins in his/her particular set. The information called for the name and address of the coin's owner, the coin's diameter, its weight (in troy grains) and condition, descriptions of its obverse and reverse, contents of the fields and exergue, and miscellaneous remarks which could include such things as catalog reference (if any), date, and purpose of striking. A sample sheet describing a coin of Nero, not shown on the corresponding plate, is included with the paper-covered version only. Guided by this sample, the novice collector could proceed *ab initio* to properly document the contents of the collection.

Morris the author had something of the missionary zeal of his later fellow in nu-



Figure 3: One of the hand-drawn plates of selected examples of the coinage of each ruler

mismatics, George F. Heath, M.D., founder and editor of *The Numismatist* and promoter and second president of the American Numismatic Association. Morris, like Heath, also founded a periodical, *Numismatic Pilot*,<sup>5</sup> and started a club, the American Association of Numismatists. Both fizzled after a couple of years, and Morris himself died of a paralyzing illness in 1888.

Morris had ties to the larger world of numismatics. In his obituary,<sup>6</sup> William T. R. Marvin, honorary member of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society and principal of the firm that printed its journal, wrote that Morris was active in the Masonic fraternity, traveling, writing and lecturing, had “a considerable reputation as a botanist and geologist” and belonged to most of the numismatic societies in the United States. “His numismatic labors are familiar to most of our readers,” he wrote, “and need not be enumerated. Aside from magazine articles, his ‘Coins of the Twelve Caesars’ and most of the work in ‘Coins of the Grand Masters of the Order of Malta’ are best known.” (Some of Morris’s contributions to AJN are cited and discussed in Professor Weigel’s article, referenced below.)

Ebenezer Locke Mason, publisher of *Coin Collector’s Magazine*, included Morris among a small group of “eminent numismatists, past and present” in the August 1884 issue, running the portrait appearing herein with a brief biographical note about him. “Brother Morris has confined his numismatic researches and studies to ancient coinages, having collected, described, and distributed Greek and Roman coins and medals to the number of many thousands,” he wrote. “His familiarity with ancient history is known and appreciated by the world at large; and the many diplomas and honors he has received from societies and rulers at home and abroad, mark him as a man of extraordinary attainments and authority upon ancient subjects.” (As you might have deduced, both men were Masons—no pun intended).

In a fine modern biographical article,<sup>7</sup> Professor Richard Weigel, head of the department of history at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, evokes a painterly picture of Morris as a fervent Mason, the order’s poet laureate, a voracious student of history and collector of its artifacts, and advocate of ancient coin collecting for the moral values and historical lessons to be learned therefrom. The primary sources of his information are Morris’s own writings (he apparently left no personal papers) appearing in Masonic and numismatic publications, particularly in the four issues of the *Numismatic Pilot* (all of which may be found in the American Numismatic Society’s library).<sup>8</sup> Here’s how he sums up his subject:

The extensive correspondence he publishes is testimony to the many scholars and collectors around the country whom Morris reached, supplied, and influenced in a positive way. Morris’ chief priority was dissemination of numismatic treasures accompanied by the historical in-

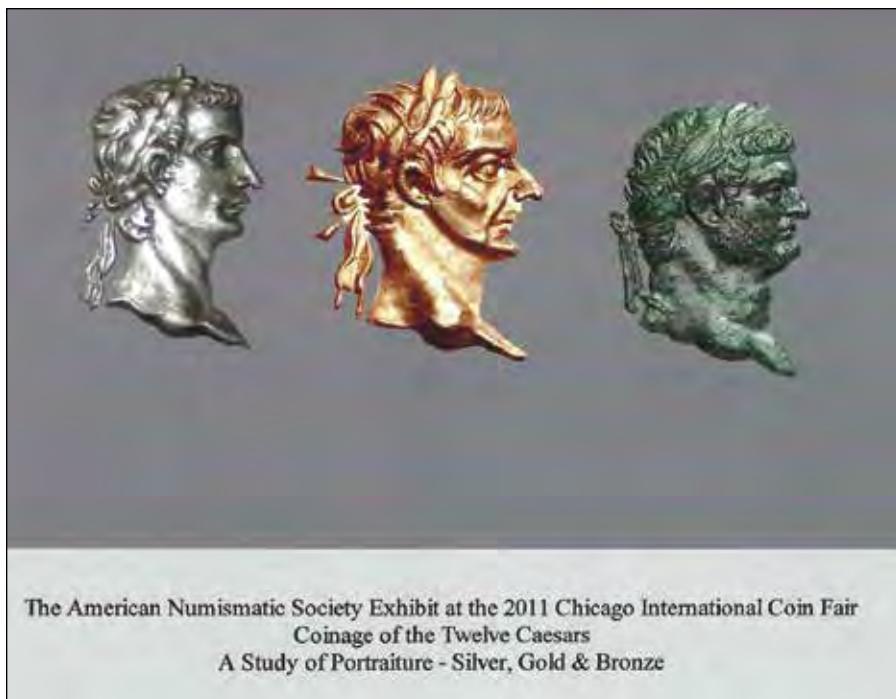
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5 Clain-Stefanelli 792, Bourne 1870-38.

6 *American Journal of Numismatics*, 23:46-47 (October 1888).

7 Richard D. Weigel, “Rob Morris: American Numismatic Trailblazer.” *The Celator* 13(2):20-24 (February 1999).

8 The entire first issue of the *Pilot* was reproduced at nearly full size in *The Celator*, 2(1):XV-XVIII (January 1988). Pagination in early issues of *The Celator* was, fittingly, in Roman numerals.



The American Numismatic Society Exhibit at the 2011 Chicago International Coin Fair  
*Coinage of the Twelve Caesars*  
A Study of Portraiture - Silver, Gold & Bronze

Figure 4: ANS exhibit catalog of *Coinage of the Twelve Caesars—A Study in Portraiture*

formation necessary to more fully understand and appreciate them. His enthusiasm for ancient numismatics was infectious and, in addition to being one of America's great Masonic leaders, his activities as dealer, collector, author, and publisher clearly mark out Rob Morris as one of the great 19<sup>th</sup>-century pioneers of numismatics in the United States.

Heath and Morris, working closely in time (Heath was a generation younger), had similar personal qualities and similar goals, yet the success that Heath achieved eluded Morris. Perhaps the more specialized American numismatic audience that Morris tapped was then too thin to match the support given by Heath's generalist audience (Heath also collected and wrote about ancients). In any event Morris did make a good start—a better one than precursor Frost.

The coinage of the Twelve Caesars remains a popular topic. The American Numismatic Society presented an exhibit, *Coinage of the Twelve Caesars—A Study in Portraiture*, at the 2011 Chicago International Coin Fair. An illustrated exhibit catalog was published (Figure 4).

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to Kerry Wetterstrom and Joel Orosz for suggesting sources of information for this story.





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# My Personal Numismatic Library

By Charles Davis

The last issue of *The Asylum* reminded me I had not submitted anything on my personal library. I have attached two photos of my office where daily research material is at hand. The main criteria to be on these shelves is usability. A book or set has to earn its keep by being accessed from time to time. Once a fraction of an inch of dust has accumulated on the top of a book it is time to find a new home for it.

A complete set of Kolbe & Fanning hardbounds is very much used, but not as much as it would be if there were a consolidated index of, say, the last 100 catalogues (Hint, Hint). Periodicals often are the most useful and I was happy to complete my set of the *British Numismatic Journal*, recently buying the tough issues in the '30s and '40s. I have Terrance Robertson's *Spink Circular* with the first 50 volumes individually bound in calf. *The American Journal of Numismatics* bound by the Harcourt Bindery is perhaps my favorite, both as eye candy and as reference. A full bound set of *The Numismatist* probably takes up more space than it is worth, but Dave Bowers *History of the ANA* makes a useful index. I had a lovely set of the *Numismatic Chronicle* through about 1950, but a good client simply offered me too much money for it—and most everything has a price.

Last and certainly foremost are the catalogues of W. Elliot Woodward, which receive as much daily attention as any of the aforementioned. Neil Musante spent hours pouring over their pages when writing *Medallic Washington* and John Kraljevich was a regular caller looking for information not available in the oft poorly-scanned cop-





ies on the Newman Portal. With so many receiving “A/B” ratings for comments from John Adams, these catalogues are the most readable and enjoyable, I feel, in 19th and early 20th American numismatics. I can’t see anyone taking a Cogan or Chapman off the shelf just to read—the main reason I banished these content-significant but comments-lacking catalogues from my library.

The award for uselessness divided by space taken has to go to the set of *Guide Books*. Taking almost 8 feet of shelf space, I began assembling a run in the early 1990s when Ken Bressett asked me to contribute to the pricing and bibliography sections—a small labor with which I was rewarded an annual contributor’s copy. That planted the seed to complete the early years by adding the set of the first 30 editions signed by Yeoman to 1st edition contributor Malcolm O. E. Chell-Frost (in whose store in Boston I was buying coins in my early years). I resisted a similar temptation for completeness after being listed as a contributor to the *Spink Standard Catalogue of British Coins* keeping just the 50th and current editions.

If I had to single out the one title I enjoy having the most it would be John Robinson’s copy of *Early Coins of America*. With all the wrappers, promotional material, order forms and other ephemera bound or laid in, it sat for 105 years in the library of the Essex Institute, my local museum when I was growing up. It is now returned to

Essex County about 7 miles from where it spent that first century.

What one title receives the most daily use without a doubt is John Adams' *United States Numismatic Literature Volume 1*, now taped and glued together. I remember talking to my dear friend, the late lamented Frank Van Zandt, who said he had poured half a bottle of Elmers glue down the hollow spine to keep his from falling apart. Mine is near that state.

Wall decorations include portraits of Boston numismatists, broadside catalogues with one from each of the three major sale hubs—Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and photographs of past A.N.A. banquets. And also prominent is Elliot Woodward's 1885 Liquor license, which under Term Five cautions "that there shall be no disorder, indecency, prostitution, lewdness or illegal gambling on the premises." I have been in 20th century coin stores that violated at least some, if not all, of these terms.

The balance of my at-hand library consists of special editions of significant works and signed copies of others. I doubt there is a book on the shelf I have not looked at in the last year.





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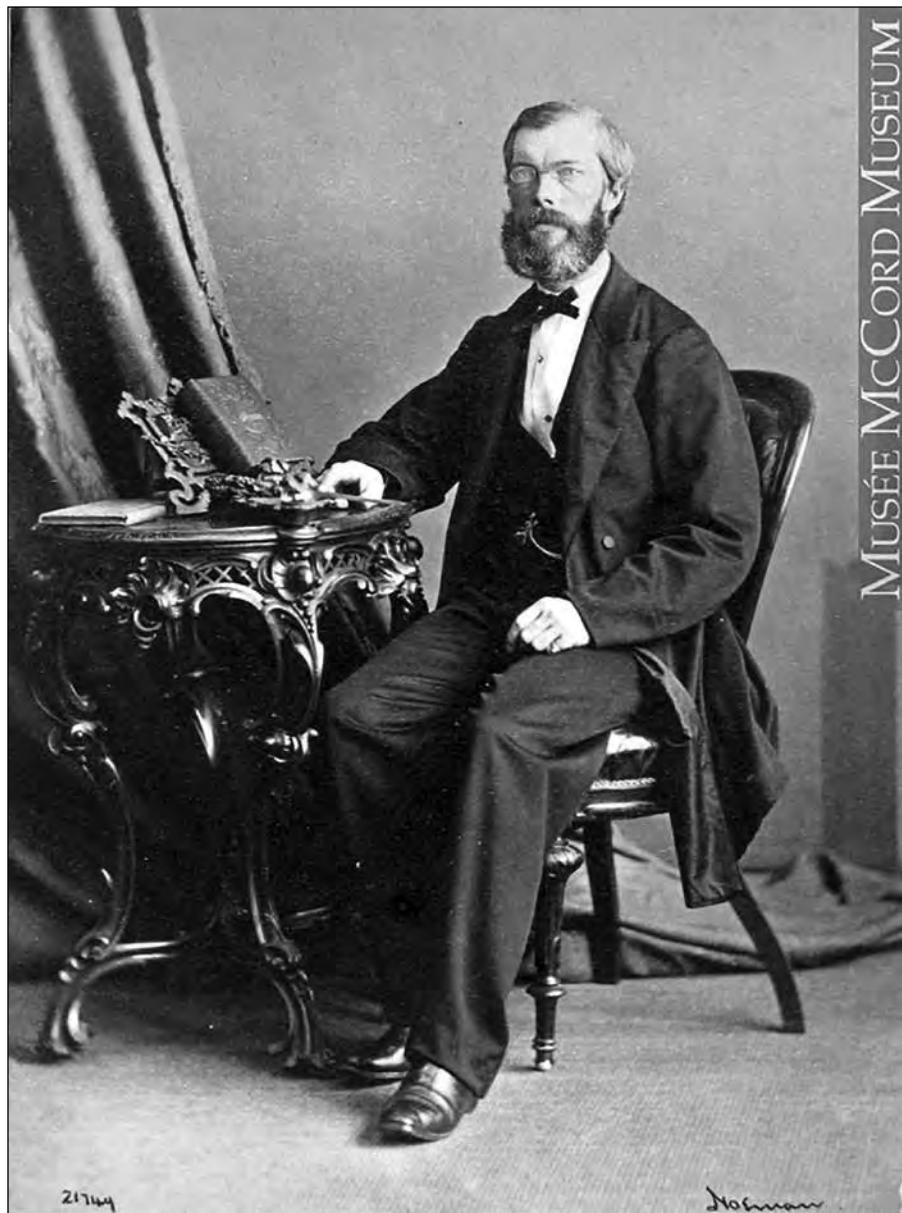
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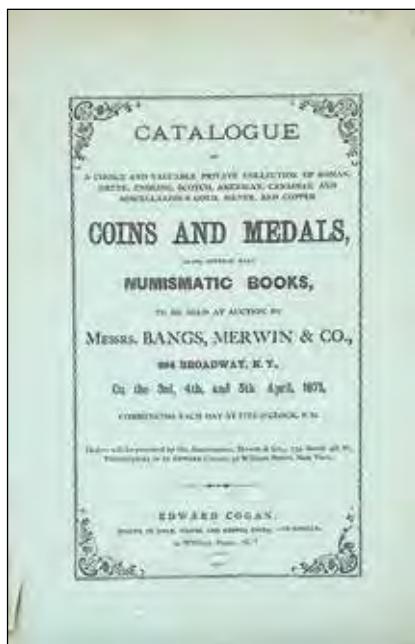
Portrait of James Ferrier, Jr., in 1866, from the Notman Archive (I-21749.1, courtesy McCord Museum).

# James Ferrier, Jr.: Hardware Merchant, Numismatist and Microscopist

By Ted Banning

In April 1871, Bangs, Merwin & Co. auctioned a numismatic collection, ostensibly catalogued by Edward Cogan, that has come to be called “the Montreal Sale” (Cogan 1871). When these auction catalogues themselves appear for sale, cataloguers typically cite Attinelli’s (1876: 58; see also Low 1885: lot 1039) claim that Alfred Sandham was both the owner and cataloguer of the Montreal sale, and Bowman (1972: 11) for the correction that the collection’s owner was actually James Ferrier, “elected Mayor of Montreal” in 1845 (e.g., Kolbe & Fanning 2016: 40). This is a common and understandable mistake, as that mayor was a very famous Montreal businessman and politician. Even a website edited by staff of the Chateau de Ramezay and posted by the City of Montreal claims that the former mayor was a member of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal (Anon 2016). Although not everyone has fallen into this trap (e.g., Bell 2016: 22), Bowman and those who cite him have confused Hon. James Ferrier, Sr., the well-known capitalist and politician, with his son, James Ferrier, Jr., who was rather less illustrious but was the numismatist in the family.

First, let us examine that Cogan sale. Clearly some contemporary numismatists thought there was a mystery there. E. L. Mason (1871), for example, says “it has been quite a mystery to know whose collection was offered ... and an equally mystifying puzzle to know who catalogued the unknown cabinet.” According to R. W. McLachlan (1911: 358), however, Ferrier’s “collection which contained a 1/2 penny bouquet, an 1838 side view and other Canadian rarities, besides a nice selection of Greek coins, was catalogued by A. Sandham and sold under the name of Edward Cogan in 1871.” We have it from McLachlan himself that Ferrier was the owner and Sandham the cataloguer of the collection, although not necessarily of all the material in the auction, even though Albert Frey or one of his associate editors misspelled Ferrier as “Ferner.” Maybe there was a good reason that Ferrier and Sandham wanted to remain anonymous at the time, but McLachlan was in a position to know their roles in this auction. Both



Sandham and Ferrier were his close acquaintances and fellow members of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal. McLachlan was also at least slightly acquainted with Edward Cogan (Anon 1926: 292).

But which Ferrier? Fred Bowman, David Fanning (2012) and Warren Baker (2017) conclude that it was James Ferrier (1800-1888), mayor of Montreal from 1845 to 1846, banker, industrialist, Chairman of the Grand Trunk Railway, and member of the Legislative Council of Canada East from 1847 to 1867 and of Canada's Senate from 1867 until his death (Tulchinsky 2003). However, it is not true that "he was one of the co-founders of the Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal" (Bowman 1972: 11). That was his son, James Ferrier, Jr. (1823-1902).

How can we be sure that it was the younger Ferrier who was the numismatist and not his father? We can start by examining the membership list and Act of Incorporation of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society. Among the 20 founding members in December 1862, we find "Ferrier, James Jr." (NASM 1892: 89; see also Breton 1894: 223), incidentally lacking the dagger used to mark founding members who were deceased (James Ferrier, Sr. died in 1888). We find "James Ferrier Jr." listed among the Fellows of the Numismatic Society of Montreal in 1866 (NASM 1866) and, in the Society's Act of Incorporation, which received royal assent in February of 1870, the second member named, right after Stanley C. Bagg, is "James Ferrier, jr." (NASM 1891: 3). His brother, George Davies Ferrier (1828-1876) was also a member from 1867 to 1876 (NASM 1892: 91). While their father, James Ferrier, Sr., was involved in the Natural History Society of Montreal and even acquired some Egyptian antiquities for its museum during a trip to Egypt and Palestine in 1859 (Gagnon 1994: 122; Lawson 2017), there is no evidence that he took any interest at all in the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society. Further, there is no question of the elder Ferrier ever having been "junior;" his father's name was George.

In addition, 19<sup>th</sup>-century documents that refer to the senator and former mayor routinely call him Hon. James Ferrier, a title reflecting his roles in the Legislative Council and Senate. Similarly, whenever the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal's publications, including *Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal*, refer to members who were Senators, Premiers, or judges, we see "Hon. Mr. Edward Murphy," "Hon. P.-J.-O. Chauveau," "Hon. Juge Gill," "Hon. Justice Robertson," and "Hon. Mr. Justice Baby." Member Ferrier never appears with the honorific, and the only instance of "Hon. James Ferrier" in the pages of *Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal* is the "Hon. James Ferrier, M.L.C." in R. W. McLachlan's (1872: 89) description of Sandham's Y.M.C.A. medals, which list the elder Ferrier among the *ex-officio* directors of the Y.M.C.A.

Although he never specifies the "Jr.," McLachlan's reminiscences of his youthful days of numismatics, already cited, make it abundantly clear that the Ferrier he was describing was precisely the founding member of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, and not his father. After a section where he describes a couple of his boyhood numismatic friends and his mentor, Joshua Bronsdon, he includes James Ferrier among "the active members of the society when I was first introduced, those who were its founders, all enthusiastic collectors" (McLachlan 1911: 358). He then goes on to mention this Ferrier's connection to the Cogan auction.

Although there is no evidence that James Ferrier, Sr. was *not* a coin collector, nor is there any that he was. Meanwhile, there is abundant evidence of James Ferrier, Jr.'s numismatic activity at precisely the time when Cogan's Montreal Sale took place. Bowman simply made an understandable mistake.

So, who was this younger, less illustrious James Ferrier?

He was born in Montreal on September 1, 1823. As already noted, his father was Hon. James Ferrier, MLC, who immigrated from Perth, Scotland, where he had worked in a mercantile establishment, at the age of 21. His mother was Mary Todd (1799-1881), born in Dundee, Scotland.

Tulchinsky (2003) says it was James, Jr. who partnered with Alexander Bryson in a hardware business on St. Paul St., Bryson & Ferriers, but the city directories originally list his younger brother, George, as Bryson's partner, with James Jr. only being mentioned from 1844 onward, and always in a secondary position (Lovell 1843: 68; 1844: 69; 1847: 76; 1849: 87). Their wealthy father invested heavily in the firm, which seems to have dissolved by 1850 (Lovell 1850: 44, 93). James Jr. continued to live at his parents' house during this period, while George D. Ferrier had his own place nearby.

In 1851, James Ferrier, Jr. became the principle in a successor business, Ferrier & Co., general hardware, at the corner of St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier streets (Lovell 1852: 89; 1855: 84). On February 7, 1856, James married Sarah Carr Bullock (1824-1912), who had immigrated from Northumberland, England in 1855 (Drouin 2008). After the marriage, the couple lived in James Ferrier, Sr.'s house at 84 Alexander St. until 1862, when they moved to Leicester Place on University Ave. George D. Ferrier had joined his brother's company by 1861 (Lovell 1856: 96; 1860: 93; 1861: 81; 1862: 104), and their father continued to make significant investments in his sons' firm.

James and Sarah moved again in 1864, this time to 5 Beaver Hall Square, where they would stay until 1879, when they moved to 144 Metcalfe St. (Lovell 1864: 204; 1865: 145; 1880: 352; 1895: 628). They had four children but the first, James Carr Ferrier, died in infancy in 1857. Daughters Florence (1861-1926) and Alice (1864-1922) never married and, along with Sarah, moved to England after James's death. The youngest, Dr. Walter Frederick Ferrier (1865-1950), after studying at McGill University and in Heidelberg, became a prominent geologist and mining engineer. His impressive mineral collections became the basis for those of the Smithsonian Institution, Royal Ontario Museum, Redpath Museum, University of Manitoba, and University of Alberta, while he also contributed hundreds of specimens to the Harvard Mineralogical Museum (Stevenson 1972).

By 1880, James Ferrier, Jr. had joined W.M. Mooney & Co., proprietors of the Canada Horse Nail Company (Lovell 1880: 352; 1881: 379). It was reportedly in 1865 that W.M. Mooney founded this firm, although neither Mooney nor the company appeared in the Montreal directory until 1867. Its factory at 29 (later 129) Mill St., drew hydraulic power from the Lachine Canal, and the company grew into Canada's foremost supplier of horseshoe nails (Chambers 1903: 213; Lovell 1867: 99; 1870: 217; 1880: 268; Willis 1987). James's brother, George D. Ferrier, already had a relationship with this company by September 1870, when he, Mooney, and J. B. Willis



Advertisement for Canada Horse Nails from a Hobbs Hardware catalog (Hobbs 1893).

(Chambers 1903: 213).

Returning to Ferrier as numismatist, McLachlan (1911: 358) informs us that, when he first got to know Ferrier in the 1860s, he was “a most active collector, but having purchased a fine microscope became attracted by microscopy and so lost interest in numismatics.” Again, he was well-placed to know, as he was also into microscopy for a time and both McLachlan and James Ferrier, Jr. exhibited their microscopes at the Annual Conversazione of Montreal’s Natural History Society (NHS 1870).

The Montreal Microscopic Club, founded in 1868, was the vehicle for Ferrier’s new passion. Its objectives were the “promotion of microscopic knowledge amongst its members, by regular meetings for practical microscopic work, and for the interchange of ideas and experiences on microscopical subjects” (Edwards 1869b).

James Ferrier, Jr. also had other scientific interests in the Natural History Society. At its monthly meeting of March 29, 1869, for example, he donated a common goldeneye and a pair of Burrow’s goldeneyes (presumably taxidermic specimens). He was also the Society’s Treasurer from 1860 to 1874 (Edwards 1869a: 207, 211, 216-217; Phillips 1902).

But even though his interest in numismatics waned, it did not disappear entirely. He remained a member of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society (in fact he was a life member), even if he rarely attended meetings after that Cogan sale of 1871. At

took out a patent for a new design of horse nail (Canada Patents 1882: 187; Priess and Shaughnessy 1972). Ferrier & Co. had encountered financial stresses in the 1870s (Tulchinsky 2003) and it seems that James wound up the firm and took over George’s interest in W.M. Mooney & Co. after his brother’s death in 1876. Ferrier & Co. disappeared from the directories by 1877 (Lovell 1876: 417; 1877: 402). In 1892, James Ferrier, Jr. took control of the Canada Horse Nail Company, although he is not listed as proprietor in the directories until 1895 (Lovell 1894: 508; 1895: 513, 628; McNally 1992: 45). He was the company’s President until his death in 1902, when John Torrance succeeded him

the meeting of December 13, 1876, for example, he donated several Haitian notes of 1828 to the Society and exhibited a collection of notes related to the Canadian rebellions of 1837 (Hart 1877: 140). In 1898 (a decade after his father's death), he donated a Victoria jubilee medal of 1897 (NASM 1898: 190).

At the age of 78, James Ferrier, Jr. died of pneumonia on February 13, 1902 and was buried in his parents' plot at Mount Royal Cemetery. His death captured the attention of several business magazines and the Natural History Society (Phillips 1902) but went unnoticed in the numismatic press.

Fraser Brothers, Auctioneers, sold the Ferrier library right out of his home at 144 Metcalfe St. the following May 9 and 10 (Fraser and Fraser 1902). As the cataloguers describe it, it was "rich in Canadiana, in works on the history of Methodism, Microscopy, Natural Science and a curious collection of works on Ghost and Folk-lore, Dreams, etc." That only 14 lots in the sale pertained to numismatics would seem to bear out McLachlan's assertion that Ferrier had lost interest in coins. These include H. N. Humphreys' *Ancient Coins and Medals of Greece and her Colonies*, John Yonge Ackerman's (1844) *Coins of the Romans Relating to Britain*, Alfred Sandham's (1872) *McGill College and its Medals*, James Simon's (1749) *An Essay Towards an Historical Account of Irish Coins*, and a poorly described 1614 edition of Antonio Zantani's *Omnium Caesarum Verissimae Imagines ex Antiquis Numismatis Desumptae* with engravings by Aeneas Vico. Ferrier's other numismatic literature had already been sold three decades earlier (Cogan 1871: lots 1743-1758). By comparison, the vast majority of lots 533 to 624 in the Fraser Brothers sale concerns microscopy, both early and late. Among the former is a 1695 book by Antonie van Leeuwenhoek, inventor of the simple microscope.

James Ferrier, Jr. was far from being one of the foremost 19<sup>th</sup>-century numismatists in Montreal but, as the scope and a scattering of rarities in that Cogan sale show, he nonetheless deserves to escape the long shadow of his famous father.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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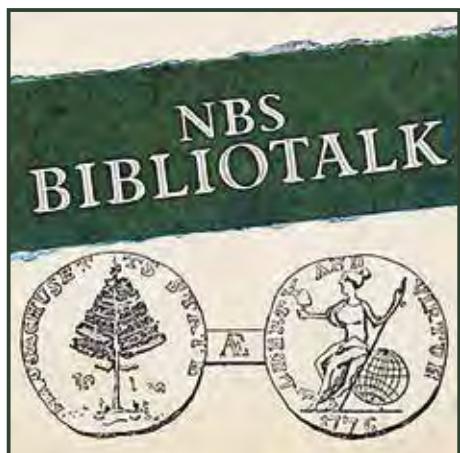
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# A Collection of Trifles

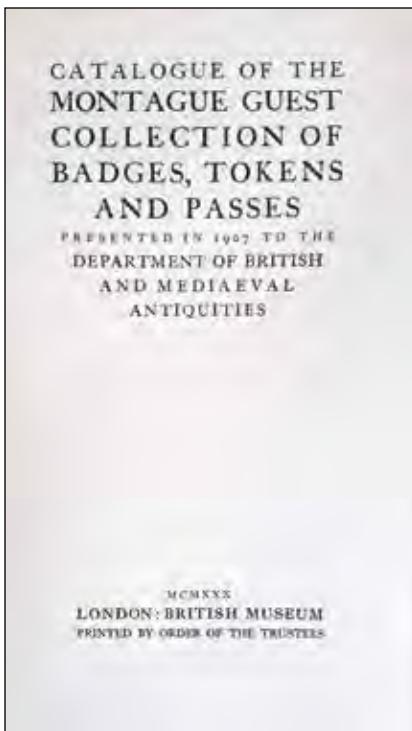
By David Pickup

Where I live libraries are gradually re-opening after the coronavirus lockdown. You cannot go to the shelves and look for a book but you can ask books by subject. A librarian then selects some and you go in and collect them. The first time I was too specific in my choice and the second time I just asked for any nonfiction books on history. That gave the librarians a fairly wide choice and I later came away with an armful of books. I could only see two people working in what would normally be a busy library. One of them recognized me, but still let me in. The lady on the front door was wearing a face visor which made her look as though she was about to do some welding.

I must not complain. I am fortunate to have any access to a library. I have missed going to a library. Many libraries are in decline but this one is very successful. Pre-coronavirus I was able to order books from the reserve stack where I know the best volumes are. This is where they keep the serious stuff and it is books like that I need for research.

My personal numismatic library is quite comprehensive and contains some specialist works but it never has everything I need. At the moment I want a good book on mints and minting because I am interested in what it was like to strike coins. Was it good work, well paid and what was it like to wake up and think another day at the mint? But no, I do not have anything on that. I am not sure such a book exists so I need a library to look at more general books on the history of the Tower of London or industrial accidents.

What I do have is a book called the catalogue of the Montague Guest Collection which I acquired recently. I skimmed through it and thought that is an interesting book and then put it away and forgot about it. It is one of those books you think that it may come in handy one day. Well, the day came! I had bought a lot of tokens, checks and oddments because one of the items interested me. When I was trying to research the cemetery token, burial society check, wages checks and assorted pieces of metal, I found one was listed in Montague Guest's book.<sup>1</sup>



Title page of Montague's catalogue

Montague Guest gave his collection to the British Museum on condition that they published a catalogue. He donated it in 1907 but it was not published until 1930. In the preface to the catalogue, Reginald A Smith, a Keeper at the British Museum, called it a “collection of trifles... of unusual character.” Montague Guest was a member of upper class, Edwardian society. He was the third son of Lady Schreiber who was a famous collector of Eighteenth-century English china and was called “the greatest of the nineteenth century lady collectors.” He was a bachelor and belonged to a number of gentlemens’ clubs, was a free-mason, and Liberal party politician. He was a Member of Parliament for Youghal in Ireland in the 1860s and Wareham in Dorset for five years, a magistrate for London and Dorset, County councillor and keen yachtsman.

He was well known in society and a favorite of royalty. He died in 1909 at a shooting party on the royal estate at Sandringham in Norfolk while a guest of King Edward VII. His obituary<sup>2</sup> states he had a lifelong interest in people and things and was a great connoisseur and collector of engraving and gems. He was one of the best raconteurs in London. His society life meant he was in a position to collect badges and passes issued to the privileged classes and these form the basis of the catalogue.

The book itself has a large section on tokens from theatres and places of entertainment, inns, taverns, and some from schools and other subjects. Manville<sup>3</sup> calls the collection an eclectic one. However, it does not include admission cards from race meetings and commemorative badges sold in the street for special occasions.

The item that I was researching is a small brass token or ticket. It is about a farthing size and on side says:

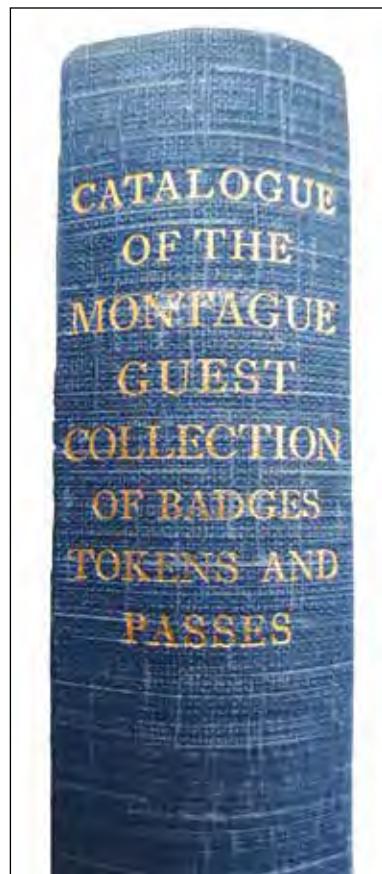
PRINCESS'S ROOMS WEEKLY TICKET

and the other

F. PIAGGIO WEEKLY TICKET

Both sides have a central figure 1

Montague Guest has a similar piece but made of white metal and the inscription is slightly different:



Spine of Montague's catalogue

PRINCESS'S ACADEMY F. PIAGGIO NOT TRANSFERABLE

PRINCESS'S ACADEMY F PIAGGIO TICKET FOR LESSONS AND PRACTICE.

A look through newspapers online led to some advertisements in the 1880s for dancing lessons and practise at 7:00 p.m. each night, apart from Sunday and Monday. You got four hours practice for one shilling at his rooms near Oxford Circus in central London.<sup>4</sup>

In 1894 Mr. Piaggio was prosecuted for keeping a place of public resort without a certificate from local council.<sup>5</sup> The court heard evidence about whether it was private dancing lessons or a public event. A police sergeant gave evidence he went for dancing lessons to keep in practice for the City Police Ball. Piaggio was convicted and fined £5 and 2 shillings costs. He was in trouble the following year when he was fined £10 plus 8 shillings costs.<sup>6</sup> It was pointed out the premises were a fire hazard as there was only one exit and about one hundred people there.

Do you sense a certain hesitation in the history of the book? Why did it take so long for the catalogue to be published? Did numismatists wonder if these “trifles” had much scholarly value at all? Anyway, should not people with money collect ancient Greek or gold nobles or proof coins? Perhaps they thought rich people should only collect ancient Greek or Roman coins and could not accept that a man who knew the king and queen would collect pub tokens. Surely not!

ENDNOTES

- 1 Anon, (1930), *Catalogue of the Montague Guest Collection of Badges, Tokens and Passes Presented in 1907 to the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities*. London: British Museum,
- 2 *Western Gazette*. Yeovil, Somerset, 12th November 1909.
- 3 H.E. Manville. *Encyclopaedia of British Numismatics* (Vol 2). (1997). London: Spinks.
- 4 *Pall Mall Gazette*. London, 13th September 1887.
- 5 *The Standard*. London, 29th December 1883.
- 6 *The Standard*. London, 9th February 1895.



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